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AGNES FALKLAND:

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CHAPTER I.

THE TRAVELER'S RETURN.

It was on the 18th of April, in the year 1775. when spring was still touched by the skirts of winter, that a horseman was riding over an almost pathless tract of country within twenty miles of the city of Boston. He rode with the confidence of an accomplished equestrian. In stature he was above the middle height. He wore a riding-coat of blue, buttoned close to the chin. With a cap upon his head, and a heavy roquelaure thrown over his shoulders, he presented something of a military appearance. He was mounted on a sturdy roan—a charger worthy of the field—and was armed with a brace of heavy pistols, a warning that he was not to be assaulted unresistingly by the marauders of the bush.

The traveler had abandoned the pleasing hope which he had cherished of reaching Boston that night, and he now gazed alternately at the sun which was setting in the west, at the treacherous road he was pursuing, and at the wilderness around, evidently desirous to find some shelter for himself and jaded beast before the night should spread its mantle over his almost impracticable course.

This traveler was Felix Temple, a native of Massachusetts, but for the last two years a resident in the South, who, seeing the inevitable crisis between the colony and the crown, was hastening from South to North to offer his services for the general weal to the authorities of his own State. His father had died by some unknown hand, an elder and only brother had mysteriously disappeared at the same time, and his mother sinking into the grave beneath these combined afflictions, Felix became the sole possessor of a small fortune and the family name. His desolation, however, was rendered less insupportable by the affection of a young lady who resided in Boston, and whose approbation he was desirous to procure to the line of conduct he felt it his duty to adopt.

Felix Temple knew not that he was now in the township of Concord—the first inland settlement of those dauntless pilgrims who so long confined themselves to the desolate tongue of Trimountain—or he might have been fearless of the approaching darkness; but, long

absence had weakened his power of recognition, and he was ignorant that he rested on ground so sacred to his ancestry.

As he journeyed along this cheerless wilderness, his thoughts received new vigor on perceiving at some distance two men crossing a path beyond him. They were in great haste; but instead of responding to his joyous hail, they quickly disappeared, as if they sought concealment. Vain were his cries and fruitless was his search. The woods tauntingly re-echoed every sound, but those he challenged responded not a word. Felix, indignant at this inhospitable conduct, abandoned the pursuit, and endeavored to resume the path from which he had been enticed; but the crooked avenues, the increased obscurity of the night, and the multitude of gaunt and leafless trees, united in concealing that chief hope of a speedy haven. After riding unsuccessfully in many directions, he galloped to the summit of a mound, which commanded a view of the country. All seemed desolate. The car of day had driven to other climes; the moon had not appeared; even the brightness of the stars in their distant majesty was darkened by impenetrable clouds.

At length, as if ignited while he stood upon the hill, a light sparkled through the forest. It was welcomed by horse and rider, for both betrayed a sense of joy; and Felix, marking well the direction, descended the height to seek the shelter which it promised. For some time he plunged among fallen trees and resisting branches, until, fatigued and impatient, he was about to ascribe the beacon he had been following to the frolic gambols of the *ignis fatuus*, when the light again appeared, and from a slight and grateful neigh of his gallant charger, he was reassured, took courage, advanced, and soon found himself in front of a small, but goodly tavern.

Felix descended from his horse, and demanded accommodation for the night. The landlord, who was engaged earnestly talking with two or three others, came slowly forward, eyed the traveller deliberately, and seemed by no means pleased at his military appearance; then he surveyed the horse, and with a determination founded upon this minute inspection, he responded:

“Stranger, you can’t stop here.”

“What!” exclaimed Felix, in astonishment, “turn a wearied traveler from your door on such a night, and in such a wilderness as this? In another hour torrents of rain will descend from those frowning clouds, and where am I to find shelter beneath these leafless trees? Where is my poor horse to refresh himself for the journey of to-morrow? Was ever such barbarity heard of in Massachusetts since the glorious landing of the fathers on Trimountain?”

The landlord had listened coolly to this interrogative rebuke, though still profoundly engaged in the study of horse and rider, while the former stood banqueting upon some edible, which he had found as his susceptible nose traversed a wooden trough erected in front of the house.

“I calc’late I’ve no room, stranger,” replied the unmoved lord of this little dwelling.

"No room!" exclaimed the angry applicant; "shame, shame on such subterfuge. Shame on such inhospitality to a famished traveler. Extinguish that light, harsh man, and allure no more benighted wanderers to your reluctant door by its false radiance, for it is, as I feared, an *ignis fatuus*—hope without succor." Then casting a piece of silver at the landlord's feet, he continued: "Come on, my gallant roan, and let us endeavor to find the cavern of some less hideous wolf before the storm bursts. There is payment for what my horse has eaten, for we will not be your debtors even for a carrot, and for the honor of Massachusetts I will endeavor to blot this adventure from my mind."

The landlord spurned the proffered coin, and, advancing toward the horse, grasped its rein at the moment Felix was about to lead it from the door.

"Stranger," he exclaimed, his face red with excitement, "them is hard words that you have used, and such as Si Bramble never listened to afore from any Britisher; but you're in a perilous place, and I can't let you go, though I thought to do so. So I guess I'll shelter you to night." Then calling loudly for "Bill," a boy appeared, to whom he delivered the horse, with strict injunctions to have it well cared for.

Felix loosened the rein that was in his hand, and saw his tired steed eagerly approach the welcome stable, and then he entered the dwelling, to which he was so unwillingly admitted. The landlord, who had preceded him, uttered not a word in explanation of his conduct, but seemed smarting beneath the severe reprimand administered by Felix. He, however, soon joined his former companions, who were conversing in whispers at the extremity of the room.

Thus the time passed until supper was announced. The meal was welcome to Felix, and he ate with the hunger of one who had not tasted food since early morning. The landlord presided. His whispering associates were all seated at the table, and all joined in a general disregard of Felix; but by their subdued voices and significant glances he felt that they were leagued in some secret mischief of which it was not unlikely he was the object.

Supper ended, Felix visited the stables to see to the comfort of his horse, and on retiring he took the precaution to remove his pistols from the holsters of his saddle, which he had before neglected. Returning to the house he found that the visitors and the landlord had left. The only person visible was a girl, who, at his urgent request, conducted him to a room assigned him for the night.

Felix now sat down, upon a chair of substantial structure, to his own meditations. They were not consolatory. He neither approved the conduct of the landlord, the guests of the house, nor the unsocial character of his treatment. He was unacquainted with the subject of their conversation; but he observed that in their gesticulations, they exhibited great resolution, as if bent upon some exploit which demanded all their courage. He had given as little attention to their pantomime as possible, that he might not excite the jealousy of this

secret group whose free discussions he seemed to have so inopportunately checked. Si Bramble, too, had evidently extended to him the shelter of his roof either for the reputation of his hospitality or for some more designing purpose; but certainly from no generosity of feeling.

The result, however, of his reflections was to rise from his chair and securely bolt the door, to look carefully beneath the humble bed, and then to examine if the room were otherwise impervious to nightly visitation. The scrutiny disclosed nothing that he could not penetrate but the door of a closet. Against this he placed a table and the chair on which he had been sitting, the only articles of furniture in the room except the bed. Then he advanced to the window and looked out upon the night. It was dark and cheerless. Although he could perceive no figure, he thought that he heard voices and footsteps among the opposite trees. The house was surrounded by a piazza upon which his window opened, making his room easy of access; he therefore determined to rest but not to sleep, and casting himself upon the bed without removing a particle of his dress, and placing his pistols by his side, he reclined his troubled head upon his thorny pillow. He divided his vigilance between the closet-door and the window of his apartment. But as the night advanced, the goddess of sleep danced perfidiously before his eyes, and while the door and window appeared to join in the merry reel, she waved her mesmeric wand and summoned him to her realms—he slumbered.

The night passed on. Felix, happy in repose, smiled softly and uttered the name of "Agnes" as the image of his love, in all her grace and beauty, glided before his vision and beckoned him to hasten to her presence. While the emotions of this pleasing scene rested on his mind, there sounded a noise of thunder in his ear, and he awoke from the delightful trance to find his room filled with a sheet of flame. The window was open to the piazza, the mystic closet-door was thrown back, and to his astonished senses there seemed to emerge from its narrow walls an army of combatants. Felix thought these men were assembling for his destruction. Intrepid in peril, he arose from his bed, seized his pistols, and taking a deadly aim at one of his intruders, he pulled the trigger. A flash but no report responded to this action. He was astounded. A weapon he had thought immaculate, and on whose truth he rested his security in travel, had missed fire. He had only one other resource against these grim enemies—his second pistol—but this proved as harmless as the first. At this repeated treason in his arms, he heard a subdued laugh among those who occupied his room; but it was stifled by the fall of some heavy body, the extinguishing of the flame, and the discharge of a musket in the room. There was an instant rush for the open window, and Felix fell helplessly upon his bed, exclaiming, as his thoughts recurred to the subject of his dream:

"Oh, Agnes, Agnes!"

CHAPTER II

ON TO CONCORD!

As the morning began to dawn, so did the reason of Felix Temple. Both shed a ray into the chamber at the same moment, where glimmered a tallow candle and where watched an anxious girl. Felix gazed around the room, recognized the chamber, wondered at the female occupant, and then endeavored to separate the absolute from the visionary occurrences of the night. The girl, who, until he unclosed his eyes, had been employed in fomenting his forehead, now said :

“ Stranger, I guess you’re better ? ”

“ I suppose I am,” replied Felix, “ but my head is strangely confused.”

“ I calc’late so,” replied the girl. “ Si Brambles said ’twould, and that’s why he to’d me to soke it with water.”

“ Oh, Si Bramble,” observed Felix. “ I remember, he is the worthless owner of this inhospitable shanty. I suppose I am indebted to him for the fiendish treatment that I have received.”

“ This ain’t a shanty,” quickly responded the indignant girl. “ Si Bramble ain’t a devil, ef that be what ye mean—he did nothen agin ye.”

“ Then why am I prostrate here ? ” demanded Felix. “ Why was I shot at in this room at midnight by half-a-dozen villians, and why are you here to revive me from the injuries that I have received, perhaps to meet no better fate.”

“ Well,” said the girl, laughing, “ I guess you’re a running on like a colt without a halter. Yon wasn’t shot. You was only knocked down by accident, and your head fell agin the bed-post, and ye was kinder stunned.”

Felix was angry at the manner in which this young maiden treated his misfortunes, and believed her statement false; but he concealed his feelings, and pointing to the open closet-door, he asked :

“ What place is that ?—The door was fastened when I entered the room last night.”

The girl blushed perceptibly, and Felix found that he had propounded a troublesome question; but she answered :

“ We calls that a pantry.”

“ And is a pantry for such ware as muskets, swords, bayonets and other murderous weapons ? ”

“ You’re mighty observin’ in your sleep,” replied the girl; then rising from her seat and walking toward the window, she added, in a subdued tone, not intended for the ear of Felix, “ It wo’d not do to keep muskets in likely places at these times.”

Felix recalled this little sentinel to her chair, and when she was reseated he said :

“ Be truthful, my good girl, and tell me who is Si Brambles—who

are his comrades? Are they men of violence and hold me ~~their~~ prisoner?"

"Prisoner!" exclaimed the girl. "You're no prisoner. I guess you're free to go whensomever you feel able."

Felix could scarcely credit the truth of the announcement. He rose from his bed, and despite the pains which he now felt more acutely, he determined to quit the house. The girl disappeared, but soon returned with bread, eggs, and butter, of which she invited him to partake before his journey.

"You must not go hungry and faint away from Si Bramble's house, for although you are a Britisher and an enemy and a spy, you shall not say that the settler shuts his door agin the traveler in the forest."

Felix stood aghast at the slander of this voluble maiden. He thought that she could not have mistaken his nationality—that she could not seriously brand him as a Briton and a spy; but then, again, he reflected that he had accepted the shelter of Si Bramble with silence and reserve, and that in times like these men were apt to regard with suspicion mysterious and uncommunicative travelers.

"My kind little nurse," at length he said, "why do you term me an enemy and a spy. Accept my assurance that I am neither. I love my country too well to be the one, and I scorn to pursue the despicable occupation of the other. I am an American—a native of Massachusetts—and am now on my way to Boston to offer my services in the cause of freedom."

Scarcely had these words been pronounced by Felix, when the girl whom he addressed rushed to his side, seized his hand with delight, and might even have registered her joy upon his lips had he been less in stature, so great was her enthusiasm.

"I guess I'm mad wid pleasure," exclaimed the poor girl, "and I guess ef you'll eat some breakfast I'll tell you all about last night."

Felix acceded to the terms, and the girl commenced:

"This mornin' the Britishers are to have a hunt for powder at Lexington and Concord. 'Tain't there—tis hid; but the men is riled, and have taken to their guns. Si kept part o' the muskets in that pantry, and when the boys wanted 'em you was here—I had showed you to the wrong room. Well, it couldn't be helped, so they agreed to walk in and take em' when you was asleep. The hour came. Si entered at the winder and unlocked the pantry door, and the men follered for their arms. They complained o' the darkness, and Joe Riley carried in a pine torch. Then you woke up—mighty frightened, I dare say, at the big flame and the men. You took your pistols and would have fired, but 'twouldn't do; Will Foster had drawn the charges, and laughed so much when you pulled the second trigger, that he stumbled, and fell down with his loaded musket, which went off, and so frightened Joe Riley that he threw down the pine branch and all was dark agin. The boys were all alarmed—some thought that you had fired, notwithstanding the trick of Will Foster—some feared that the powder in the pantry had blowi

up, and they all crowded out o' the room and knocked you down. Si would not leave you thus, he got a light, found you upon the floor, and after puttin' you upon the bed, he told me not to leave you till you were roused from your fit."

"And faithfully you have attended me," replied Felix; "but where is good Si Bramble that I may grasp his honest hand and teach him to regard me as a friend and not a foe?"

"He's gone with the minute-men," replied the girl. "They say that every man 'll be wanted to-day, and I believe that every man is gone." Then she added, archly, "ye'll find the whole batch on 'em at Lexington or Concord ef you'll go."

"Well said, brave girl," exclaimed Felix. "I will follow these patriots to the field, and you can learn from them upon their return whether Felix Temple is longer an object of their suspicion."

Felix proceeded to the stables to ascertain whether any liberty had been taken by Mr. Will Foster with the horse as well as with the pistols; but to his delight his gallant roan was well rested and in condition for the road. He led the animal to the house, bade farewell to his amusing and kind hostess, and rode forward to participate in the events of one of the great days in the history of America's Independence.

As he rode on, his eye glanced in the direction of Boston.

"Oh, Agnes," he exclaimed, "you have a rival mistress in my heart, and I who made such efforts yesterday to cast myself at your feet, am to-day decoyed from the path by other charms; but it is the guileless fascinations of the goddess of Liberty to which I now succumb and should I win her smiles they would confer upon thee and upon my country tenfold blessings."

CHAPTER III.

RETRIBUTIVE BLOOD.

WHILE these errors and misconceptions were being unfolded at Si Brambles' house, a strong detachment of British forces was secretly embarking at Boston, and, sailing up the Mystic river under the dark of night, had landed at a rendezvous from which Lexington was more easily accessible. This adventure had been undertaken in consequence of intelligence conveyed to General Gage, the Governor of Massachusetts, that in that village was established a magazine of powder, which had been artfully withdrawn from Boston beneath loads of manure and other hidden means by the disaffected colonists, and stored for rebellious purposes.

While yet concealed by the darkness, the British debarked, and

commenced their stealthy march toward Lexington, which they hoped to reach with the first rays of the sun; but they were watched by unseen eyes, and some little preparation had been made for their reception. The men had assumed their arms, and the boys and women—no less patriotic than their sires and husbands—had conveyed the powder into the intricacies of the surrounding woods, and concealed it in caves and holes, and beneath leaves and branches, so that when the enemy arrived, but little of the coveted treasure was within his grasp.

The British came within sight of the village spire, divided their force, and six companies, commanded by Major Pitcairn, debouched upon the common, and playing upon their fifes and drums the then derisive air of “Yankee Doodle,” approached the court-house, where stood about one hundred of the militia, armed, silent, but resolute. The Major viewed this weakness with contempt, and when within hearing, he exclaimed, with a voice of thunder and face of fire:

“Surrender, knaves! Lay down your arms!”

The militia were enraged at the grossness of this language, and referred menacingly to their guns; but they were entreated by their officers not to fire unless they were first assailed. The impatient Major, perceiving his command was disregarded by the militia, cried out to his men:

“Surround the knaves!”

The soldiers, obedient to the order of their officer, advanced to perform his bidding, when a few of the militia, unable longer to restrain their ire, discharged their muskets. This was enough for the exasperated Pitcairn. He dashed in front of his men, and discharging his pistol, he vociferated:

“Advance—Fire!”

And a fatal volley was poured from British arms upon that gallant knot of American militia, the echo of which inflamed the heart of every lover of his country, and the four men who fell that morning were revenged in blood, and their ashes consecrated in the triumph of the day.

At this eventful period, Felix Temple arrived upon the scene. As he flew across the common in breathless haste, he saw the fire issue from the muskets of the British, and when the smoke cleared off, he saw the lifeless bodies on the ground and the remainder of the militia in retreat. Even the enemy, appalled at their crime, did not immediately repeat their fire, and the vengeance of Pitcairn being for the moment glutted, he commenced his search for powder.

Felix joined the retiring Americans. He rode up to two men who were apart from the others, saying:

“Where, my friends, is your place of rendezvous?”

The men regarded him fiercely. Neither replied; but one raised his musket, leveled it at the heart which he thought so false, and was about to fire, when Felix, extending his unresisting hands, exclaimed:

“Forbear, comrade, or you will slay a friend—an American—a

native of Massachusetts—a lover of the freedom of his country. I am all three. I witnessed the massacre of yonder bleeding patriots. That wanton barbarity has set my heart on fire. Even now I perceive the hallowed souls of those devoted bodies hovering in the air that they may rejoice at the work of vengeance at our hands before they depart to other realms. Then let us hasten the retribution. The whole country must be roused. There must this day be a mighty gathering, that our glorious country may prove to those scarlet-clad ruffians its power to resist and triumph.”

During this declamation, the threatening musket had been lowered, the savage energy of the hearer was chased away by a smile, and when Felix had ended, the man rushed to his side, seized both his hands, shook them with fervor and delight, exclaiming :

“Your pardon, stranger. I’ve done ye a grievous wrong. I—”

“Ah, Si Brambles,” said Felix, as he recognized his host. “We have been mutually in error. All is explained. But the rendezvous man, the rendezvous?”

“Concord,” replied the astonished Si.

“Concord!” repeated Felix. “I know it well—a six mile ride. Then thither I go, and as I pass along I will kindle such a flame as will make these woods too hot even for British warriors. Get the men together, good Si, and follow to Concord, where I shall be proud to lead you.”

Like an arrow from a bow, Felix now dashed across the common and into the woods, to which concealment Si Brambles had watched him in speechless wonder, and when he was no longer visible, he turned to his companion, and beckoned him to follow, saying, as they hastened toward the scattered men :

“Them fiery words o’ the stranger are scorching my very vitals. Gad! I’m equal to thrice the number of Britishers I was a minute back. Let’s gather the men, Will, and foller, for I can scarcely keep my feet from runnin’ in his tracks.”

Soon afterward, Si Brambles was seen in front of the militia whom he had mustered, and after a short but vehement harangue, the noble fellows followed him at a rapid pace to Concord.

In the mean time, Felix had reached the village. He announced the fatal occurrences at Lexington. Officers and men exhibited the greatest emotion, and awaited with impatience the arrival of a foe whom they now vowed to conquer. Scouts were dispatched instantly to all the surrounding country to publish the disaster that had befallen the men of Lexington.

Every man, as he heard of the slaughter, armed himself and marched to the gathering, and every son capable of bearing arms followed the example of his father. A brave and determined force rapidly assembled.

Soon the British columns were seen advancing. Their glittering arms, their steady tramp, and their compact order, gave them a formidable appearance, which was increased by their military attire. By a singular anomaly, the belligerents were separated by the river

Concord, whose waters slaked their thirst without quenching the ~~re-~~ful passions of their hearts.

The British crossed the bridge in the face of the enemy, whom they thought inconsiderable; but life was in every hollow of the earth, in every tree and bush, and behind each jutting rock and rising mound of this rude and rugged country, and soon this gallant corps recrossed the waters, and for their better preservation, and with martial prudence, were about to remove the foot-planks of the bridge, when the Americans advanced.

“Now, boys,” exclaimed Felix, as his men presented their muskets at the British, “deliver up the hidden powder.”

A cheer was heard, and then a volley was poured upon the busy artisans which drove them shrieking from the mischief of their labor—except a few who remained in obedience to an unerring aim, for they were dead.

The British—the veteran British—the soldiers of the powerful monarchy of England—trained carefully to arms—whose lives were occupied in the exercises of the field—were in retreat. They were falling back before the untutored Americans, whose powder they had marched to pilfer, and had found it—in their muskets. Back, back, they went, preceded by swift messengers to Boston, imploring reinforcements, or they could not be saved.

The horrors of Lexington still rung like an alarm-bell through the country, and the Americans increased their numbers at every step, which enabled them so to harass the enemy in his retreat, as to reduce him to the verge of despair. The British had a reserve at Lexington, but the junction, which could not be prevented, gave them no additional confidence; their eyes were ever turned toward Boston in anxiety for succor.

At length relief appeared. Nine hundred unconquered warriors, commanded by the gallant Percy—of the family of the renowned, imperishable Hotspur—raised the sinking courage of the hunted British. The young chieftain dashed to the field with the courage of his ancestry, assured of an easy victory; but he soon saw the fallacy of attempting more than to cover the retreat of his distressed fellow-soldiers; so, instead of achieving a triumph, he retraced his footsteps towards Boston. The Americans, inveterate in their pursuit, followed so closely, so threateningly, that personal encounters frequently ensued.

More by accident than by appointed or assumed command—but perhaps by a fellowship in untiring ardor and energy—Felix became the leader of a small band on this memorable occasion. These men performed such acts of fearlessness as to render their cry a terror to the assailed, which was that of “Lexington and Vengeance!” Among them was one who particularly engaged the attention of Felix. He was poorly clad, but moved with a grace and flexibility that made him easily distinguishable from his associates. He was otherwise conspicuous as carrying no musket, but using as a weapon of offence a hay-fork. Of this implement, however, the enemy had great

dread, for the bearer was fierce and unrelenting. Felix was gazing upon the tall figure, and handsome though occasionally vacant face of this young hero, and was about to advance toward him for the purpose of ascertaining his name and station, when a portion of the enemy, perceiving his band alone, charged upon them with great violence. They were met with equal bravery, but being greatly outnumbered, were retreating, when one of the British attempted to bayonet Felix. His pistols were discharged, and he had only his sword to defend himself, and was in the utmost peril. At this juncture the young volunteer was near, perceived the unequal combat, and threw himself upon the British soldier, who dropped his musket, and Felix stood unharmed. A struggle, however, ensued—the rivals fell to the ground, but soon the volunteer arose, and the Briton weltered in his blood. The scene passed as rapidly as it is told.

Felix, grateful for life, sought to grasp the hand of his deliverer, when he observed that the fellow, apparently unconscious of the brave nature of his act, was busily and with a triumphant pride taking from the dead soldier his cartridge-box and belt; then, shouldering his musket, he advanced to join the ranks, proud of his newly-acquired equipments, and perfectly unmindful of the assistance he had rendered to his commander.

Admiration was added to gratitude as Felix perceived that the bold volunteer had rushed to his defense totally unarmed, and that he had even slain the British soldier with his own bayonet. The demands of duty were incessant; he could not follow his dauntless but eccentric preserver, but, hoping that both might outlive the day and meet again, he was soon in activity against the enemy.

Driven over hill and dale, through swamps and rivers, the British still receded toward their stronghold, harrassed and wounded by the ruthless foe which hung upon their rear. Over the summit of Prospect Hill they toiled, almost fainting from hunger and their long and weary march. At Charlestown Neck a British force advanced to cover the retreat of their defeated brethren, and never was an army more in need of succor. At Charlestown they paused in their inglorious race, encamping for the night on Bunker Hill, crossing the Charles river to Boston on the following morning.

The patriots were satisfied to retire with their well-earned laurels. They had revenged in blood the slaughter of the morning. The triumph showed how irresistible are the efforts of an indignant multitude with arms in their hands, their hearts true to each other and athirst for vengeance. Thus an impromptu army, formed chiefly from a combination of the tillers of the soil, defeated in a running fight of seventeen miles, combating throughout the day, the imperial British forces. Until this brilliant day, the prestige of the English army was so great that men feared to encounter such revered chivalry; but now the wand of the magician was destroyed, and as the beaten veterans limped and hobbled across the narrow isthmus leading to Charlestown, they heard with shame and humiliation the derisive cheers of those from whom they had flown.

No sooner was the pursuit abandoned, and the discomfited lion had settled in his den to growl away the night, than Felix sought the brave lad who had saved his life. He was nowhere to be found. He had disappeared the moment hostilities ceased.

As Felix, however, was returning from these inquiries, he heard a voice exclaim :

“Stranger, noble stranger.”

“Ah !” replied Felix, extending his hand and grasping that of Si Brambles; “my brave and worthy friend, I am rejoiced to see you.”

“I’s delighted with you, Cap’n; but I’s mad with myself.”

“Then you are the only person in the field dissatisfied with the conduct of Si Brambles. You have been among the boldest of the bold.”

“Thank’e, Cap’n,” replied Si; “but I guess none on ’em ever turned you from the homestead, nor leveled a gun at your life.”

“Let us forget these matters in our present joy,” said Felix. “You did the first in your ignorance, the second in your anger; for what true American could look upon that blood at Lexington, and spare a Briton within range of his musket?”

“True, true, Cap’n,” said Si, “but I ca’nt forget—”

“Then you must forget,” exclaimed Felix; “every feeling must be banished but that of unity. If the men of Lexington and Concord would sustain the reputation they have this day so dauntlessly erected, they must not abandon the field of their victory.”

“No, no, Cap’n,” said Si; “we’ve begun the fitin’, and I guess we’ll see it out.”

“That’s spoken like a man who has the imprint of liberty on his heart; it is, I think, the sentiment of every one who claims a portion of the glory of this day,” said Felix. “There is another subject I would name. I owe my life to the intrepidity of one of your friends. I could not thank him on the battle-field, and I am anxious to do so now the battle is finished. Can you tell me the name of this brave man, and where he can be found?”

“I calc’late I can, Cap’n,” replied Si; “he’s known the country round. Poor Job Witless, he’s very wild at times. He j’ined us at Concord with a hay-fork. He was alus mighty spry; but I didn’t think he was so good at fitin’; but then I didn’t think much of my own qualities in that there respect till my blood was up, and I tried my hand.”

“Why do you call him poor Job Witless?” demanded Felix.

“’Cause he’s a little crazy, Cap’n,” said Si. “I’ve seen him run with the fleetest horse, scramble up the highest trees—dropping from limb to limb like a squirrel—dash through briers and bushes into holes, and do sich things as half-a-dozen animals of half-a-dozen species couldn’t bate.”

“Poor lad, poor lad,” said Felix; “and where can he be found?”

“Well, Cap’n,” replied Si, “I should guess at home. His mother lives at Boston. I spied his restless eye a-lookin’ toward the city

when them red-coats crossed the Neck. He's mighty proud o' that musket, and he's sure to make to his mother's to ax her smile."

"But surely his attempt to enter Boston so armed will be attended with great danger," said Felix.

"No, Cap'n, he'll pass," said Si; "he's well known, and is a favorite wi' the sojers; but if he's wantin' other ways he's very cunnin', and few can desave Job Witless."

Felix said no more. He was greatly depressed to learn that a form so rare and manly, and a nature so dauntless should possess such mental incompleteness. The poor idiot excited a deep interest in his heart. He resolved to seek his mother, and if he found her needy, to make some such provision for her son as would enable her to wean him from his vagrant habits.

Job Witless was not the only one who regarded Boston with an envious eye. Felix Temple, who had expressed his astonishment at the rashness of the demented Job, had likewise resolved to enter the enemy's camp, and to behold his Agnes; to brave his espionage as he had braved his arms; and the strong and vigorous-minded Felix succumbed to the impulse of his feelings as well as the weakly Job.

CHAPTER IV.

MARTIAL VIGILANCE ELUDED.

GENERAL GAGE was astounded, when, as he sat by his cheerful fire in the quiet of confidence, sipping his rosy wine and enjoying the triumph of the British arms by anticipation, a horseman dashed up to his residence, his steed white with foam, bearing a dispatch from Lexington. The officers hastened to head-quarters to learn the news.

"Is the courier from Lexington, General?" asked General Howe.

"Yes," replied the former; "a reinforcement is demanded, and I have ordered Earl Percy to hasten to Smith's relief without delay."

"Relief!" repeated Howe; "surely it is to make a greater demonstration."

"No such thing," said General Gage; "it is to save us from annihilation!"

"What? fighting?" exclaimed Howe, as if such a fact were scarcely credible.

"Yes," replied Gage; "and the only powder likely to be delivered is through the barrels of these rebels' muskets."

The intelligence soon ran through the city. The Tories frowned in anger; the disaffected united in satisfaction; and the army clanged their arms to remind the hearers that vengeance was in the scab-

bard. The city was convulsed with antagonistic feelings, which were not lessened when, toward evening, the scarlet uniforms of the British were seen in rapid flight. A detachment was then ordered to their relief, and they with difficulty reached Charlestown.

While these momentous doings still occupied men's minds, Felix Temple had gained admission to the city, and walked boldly toward the residence of her who had long held his heart.

Agnes Falkland was the daughter of an opulent citizen of Boston. Her mother was dead, since which event her father had loved her with a double strength, and his chief study was her happiness. The mansion in which they resided was worthy the riches of her father; its appointments splendid, and its hospitality generous. With Agnes resided her cousin Emily, for whom Mr. Falkland was guardian, and to whom she was greatly attached. Felix Temple had met these ladies frequently, became enamored with Agnes, had found acceptance in her heart, and Mr. Falkland had yielded more to his beloved daughter's preference than his own wishes when he gave his sanction to the engagement.

Two years Felix had been absent, but his correspondence with Agnes had been unremitting; and now, agreeably to his last epistle, she was daily expecting his appearance. She knew his predisposition in the pending disruption of the colony, and she regretted the vacillating conduct of her father. He was visited by the chief officers of the army; but he yet retained among his dearest friends those willing to pledge life and fortune in their country's cause, while he himself was unprepared to make sacrifices for either.

He had heard with consternation of the expedition of the British to seize the powder of the Americans, and he was in still greater trepidation when later intelligence and demands for reinforcements gave circulation to the most extravagant rumors; but one thing was certain—blood had been spilt, and he feared the period had arrived when he should be compelled to adopt one side or the other. He found himself irresolute, weak and mentally distressed as to his true course of duty.

This was his state when Felix visited his residence. He was ushered into the reception-room, and stood there waiting the appearance of Agnes with far greater palpitatio of the heart than he had that day displayed before the bayonets of the enemy. The door opened; in another moment Agnes was in his arms. Felix forgot the toils of that long, arduous day, forgot the thousand perils that he had escaped to enter this dangerous city—forgot every thing but love, and every one but Agnes.

"But we forget, in our happiness, the terrors of the day," at length said Agnes. "Are you aware that the British troops have been defeated by the colonists?"

"I am, dear Agnes," replied Felix, smiling.

"Ah, dear Felix," said Agnes, sadly, "I learn from that stern smile that the intelligence is congenial to your heart; but, although I, too, love my country, and pray incessantly for its independence

and greatness among nations, I still hoped that this could have been effected without the horror and misery of war."

"Dearest Agnes," said Felix, profoundly, "no other currency will redeem us from the King of England's tyranny than blood. He is rapacious as the Hindoo Olin, and demands human sacrifices or unconditional servitude. The sons of America, cherishing their Baxon heritage, not forgetting their pilgrim sufferings in search of liberty upon a barren soil, have crowned their first day's battle with victory, and thus they will crown their last, or die upon the field."

"Do you intend to serve beneath the banner of your country?" asked Agnes, as she grasped the arm of Felix, and nervously awaited his reply.

"Agnes, I will not deceive you," replied Felix, clasping both her hands. "Let not my words alarm you, for I know you love this great and noble cause. I was in this day's battle. I have fought against the British from early morning to within two hours of this visit."

Agnes almost fell. She became pale and agitated. The color forsook her lips as she grasped the arm of Felix for support, as if some great emotion was passing through her heart; but, she gradually recovered, and, as she seemed again capable of listening, Felix, alarmed at her visible agony, cried:

"Agnes, dearest Agnes, does my conduct occasion you so much pain? The hope that I was earning your approval while I fought, nerved my arm with double strength in this day's trial. Must I prepare for your reproaches?"

"No, Felix," replied Agnes, "the cause you have sustained is sacred to us both; but I know that this day's work is but the prelude to sterner battle-fields—to increased and manifold perils; and that you, Felix, have resolved to share them all."

"You will not forbid it, Agnes," said Felix, caressingly. "You would not wish that I should stand aloof and see my countrymen struggle against a tyranny I hate, and for a liberty I love. You would not have me greeily to share the fruits of their victories without participating in the dangers of their battles?"

"I would not have you wear inglorious laurels, Felix," replied Agnes, "but fears and terrors are lively in a woman's mind when one who is so very dear to her is in hourly jeopardy."

Felix pressed her to his heart, and he sought by every argument and seeming cheerfulness to dismiss from her mind the apprehensions which veiled it. Agnes, however, still testified uneasiness.

"Is it prudent, Felix," she said, "thus to venture in the midst of the excited soldiers with whom you have been so lately in deadly conflict, while their dying and wounded companions are crying for vengeance?"

"The city is too much troubled, Agnes," replied Felix, "to suspect that one so deeply implicated in their defeat would dare to enter their camp. Besides, I am not much known in Boston, and the

British who were actually engaged are still in Charlestown, and I am safe from recognition."

A graceful, handsome lady now entered the room. She was evidently unprepared to meet a stranger. She paused; but as Felix rose, and she more clearly saw his face, she advanced with a smile, exclaiming:

"Welcome, welcome, Felix, to me as well as to Agnes. I knew of your approach though not of your arrival; and as I am indebted to Agnes for my information on the former subject, I suppose I must pardon her for suppressing the latter. But, you have reached this city upon an eventful day, though one of humiliation to our scarlet rulers—a day on which you may either be merry or sad—condole with them or rejoice with us—as may seem meet to you."

"If I were undecided, dearest Emily," said Felix, smiling, as he took the hand of that young lady, "that happy, joyous face would win me; but I am not. I love my country, and therefore am the more ready to celebrate than to lament the occurrences which thus inaugurate resistance."

"Born under the turbulent influence of the planet Mars," said Emily, playfully, "but at a period when he was partially in eclipse, so that you may have all his fierceness without any of the courage of a true disciple—that is, you might be more apt to enjoy a battle in the distance, than join in the deadly skirmish."

"Ah, Emily," said Felix with a smile, "you know not how I have been engaged to-day, or you would not thus severely chide me for my cowardice."

"Why, you have been occupied in galloping here," said Emily—"in urging your noble steed with whip and spur, in your impatience to arrive in Boston. What road might you travel, sir?"

"I came by Concord," replied Felix, amused at the humor of his facetious friend.

"On the very trail of victory," exclaimed Emily; "and, judging from your apparently uninjured frame, discreetly following beyond the fire of the enemy's guns."

"Cease this irony, dearest Emily," interposed Agnes. "Felix has been in the American ranks all day, although he has escaped unscathed."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Emily in affected astonishment: "a rebel in the house. I will straightway go to my uncle and tell him the choice companion that his daughter is entertaining."

Emily advanced to the door; but there she paused. It was opened by some one on the other side. She started back. It was her uncle.

"Why, Emily, my love," he exclaimed, as he entered, "you must be ill. You are pale, your lips are colorless. Sit down and recover." Then regarding Agnes and Felix, he continued: "Sir, your pardon; I did not observe you in my anxiety for my niece; but surely, you are no stranger, though I can not on the instant recall your name."

"It is Felix—Mr. Temple, father," said Agnes, blushing.

"Ah, Felix, is it you?" said Mr. Falkland, grasping his proffered hand; "two years of absence seems to affect my memory. Agnes told me of your intended visit, but these times drive every thing from one's thoughts but the passing horrors. Sit down, Felix, pray sit down. Emily, I am glad that the color has returned to those cheeks, and that a smile is upon that face. Agnes, would it not be better to hasten supper, that we may welcome Felix in a more hospitable manner than in conversation? Ah, sir, this is a terrible day to chronicle in the history of the colony. One or two of my friends, who silently sympathize with the colonists, term it a glorious one; but, as Colonel Bland says—and Colonel Bland is a well-spoken, pleasant officer of the British army, and not one of those harsh, rough military men of which we have so many—'Where is the glory of a crime that has to be atoned for? and surely the slaughter of nearly one hundred British soldiers is not an innovation upon allegiance lightly to be compromised;'—and I assure you that the Colonel is an authority. I, however, am no warrior; therefore I am useless in the field. I am no diplomatist, therefore I am unfitted for the council. This I endeavor to impress upon my friends as a reason why I should remain neuter. I am not disloyal, but I love my country, and whether it be governed by king or Congress, I shall never quit it."

The announcement of supper relieved Felix from replying to this unique declaration; but as he led his beloved Agnes to the table, he resolved to confess to her father that he was pledged to the side of liberty. The meal passed merrily. The troubles of the period were banished if not forgotten, and the clamor which rung without neither reached the ears nor affected the hearts of that happy party. At length they rose, and Mr. Falkland craved a few minutes absence to conclude a letter in the interim, Felix communicated to Agnes and Emily how Job Witless had preserved his life. Both knew him well. Both had remarked his inoffensive manners and his handsome person, and now that he had rendered such service to Felix, both promised to visit his mother, and endeavor to promote her comfort.

Mr. Falkland soon returned. He was in great consternation. He had been to the post-office with his letters, and the city was in the greatest excitement. The army was enraged and denied their defeat. They retreated because they had only one day's rations; but "the Yankees" smiled at the subterfuge, and ironically asked why they did not send for food instead of reinforcements.

"A cogent rejoinder to the royal falsehood," said Felix.

"Falsehood, I think, is too extreme a term," said Mr. Falkland, "at least, until we are well assured it is so. No doubt the royal troops attempt to lessen the humiliation of their retreat; but then, perhaps, our fellow-countrymen, proud of their advantage, may greatly magnify the achievement."

"Sir, I can assure you that the defeat is as unquestionable as the victory is glorious," observed Felix, with warmth. "After the

slaughter at Lexington, the country arose to vengeance, and drove the British from the village of Concord to the neck of Charlestown."

"Why speak thus confidently?" asked Mr. Falkland, surprised at the feeling displayed by Felix.

"Because, sir," replied Felix, "I was in the battle, and fought against the British from morning until night."

For a few minutes the abrightened man had neither speech nor motion. Agnes and Emily became alarmed, and rushed toward him; but he recovered partially, and exclaimed:

"What rashness! You have plunged your sword in blood, and are come to show to us your reeking weapon."

Felix was about to reply, but an imploring look from the irresistible eyes of Agnes kept him silent.

"Be calm, my dearest father," said Agnes, "and be not less generous to Felix than to others. He loves the liberty of his country, and following the impulse of his feelings he has drawn his sword for Congress. If I understand your principles you will not chide him for this."

"Well, well," responded the irresolute old man, "we will say nothing more of that. I am dispassionate; but still I am a man of peace, and am opposed to an appeal to arms. Felix, we must not, however, forget your safety. Every hour increases your danger in this city, for the British, who at the first intimation of these events were all confusion, are now all watchfulness."

"I fear that my appearance here is imprudent," replied Felix; "not for the peril to myself, for that I shall find some method to avoid, but for the manner in which, if seen to visit here, I might compromise your safety."

"Dismiss that from your thoughts," said Mr. Falkland. "Yours is the position of danger, which will be increased by every hour you linger."

Felix found that he could not delay his departure. The words of Mr. Falkland, which were spoken from conviction, had now alarmed Agnes, who stood pale and terrified at his position, and even the merry Emily was silent and anxious. He therefore extended his hand to Mr. Falkland, saying:

"Farewell, sir. Two years of absence made me determined to defy any danger to visit Agnes. I have seen her, and now that I find her happy and true, I go to assist in the completion of that great work of revolution which is so well begun."

Mr. Falkland took the extended hand, pressed it with sincerity, and in words scarcely audible from emotion, exclaimed:

"Farewell, Felix. God bless you. It pleases me to see such honesty in your heart," and instantly quitted the apartment.

Emily soon left the room, and Felix and Agnes were alone. For a time both were silent. Agnes, in her woman's fears, revolved in her mind the dangerous course that Felix had determined to pursue, and Felix lamented the weakness and indecision of her father, who was attempting to remain on terms of friendship with two fierce

parties burning with jealousy and hatred; but time was too precious to be thus consumed.

Agnes was soon extorting innumerable promises from Felix, chiefly in relation to care and caution; but he was content when, at each assurance, he compelled the blushing maiden to reward him with a token of her love. Then came the parting—the agonizing “farewell!” Felix reluctantly passed into the still troubled streets, and Agnes shed her tears in the only noiseless house that stormy night in Boston.

CHAPTER V.

FOOLISH JOB AT HOME.

WHILE Felix was enjoying the music of the sweet voice of Agnes, the light figure of a man was pressing along the obscurer streets of Boston. He was approaching the poorer habitations of the city, and was evidently familiar with the road, or he could not have passed with impunity the numerous pits, water-holes, and other irregularities which composed the outworks and approaches to this colony of ghaunties. The figure was armed as a soldier, clothed as a mendicant, but stepped with the grace and lightness of a *maitre de danse*. It was Job Witless on his journey home, with the pride of victory in his heart, and its trophies on his arm. He bore the musket of his dead antagonist, and he smiled with increasing sweetness as each step brought him nearer and nearer to that poor home where watched the only living creature who would listen with patience and affection to his wild and pointless stories—his mother. A ray of light which struggled through a crevice of the shutter of a lonely house—issuing from so weak a source as scarcely to be perceptible to a less practiced eye—occasioned an expression of delight. Job leaped the garden fence as was his wont, lifted the latch, and stood within the room—he was at home.

Crouched over some expiring embers on the hearth—as if anxious to imbibe their dying warmth—was a female of about fifty years of age, though severe labor and little food had registered full ten years more upon her wan and wrinkled visage. She heard the bounding leap of Job, and her careworn face was lighted up with joy as he unclosed the door.

“Ah, Job, my poor wand’rer, welcome home, wel—”

Then perceiving the musket on his shoulder and the belt upon his breast, she added, in alarm:

“What have you there, Job? Where have you been, poor boy? Them is red-coat prop’ty.”

Job, who had placed himself against the wall with his musket in his hand, as if on parade, now "grounded arms." The mother started in affright at the clang and clamor, but the only reply to her appeal was a loud and merry Ha ! ha ! ha !

"But," continued his mother, who knew his temperament, and in her love for her poor idiot boy indulged his caprices, "I guess Job ain't been stealin'. No, no; Job's his mother's good and honest son. How oft ha' we ate bread and water—prison fare—rather than deserve prison lodgin's."

Job nodded in assent.

"And I guess Job can remember," continued his mother, solicitous to glean from Job his secret, "that when we'd not tasted bread all day, and Jim Flight stole a loaf and giv'd half on it to Job, how he and his mother, hungry as they was, carried it back to the baker. Now, Job, let's do like that and carry these back to the sojer. 'Tis honest to do so, 'tis wrong not to do so. Job is alus honest."

"These is Job's," he replied; "Job been to battle !"

"Battle !" exclaimed the poor woman, convulsed with terror, which was increased by the blood which she now saw upon the musket and upon the belt.

Job again nodded in response.

"Where did this happen, Job ?" asked the despairing woman, "why did you fight ?"

"Reg'lars killed Job's friends," replied he, "and Job killed reg'lars."

"He speaks truth," said the agonized woman; "sum'at have happened, and he's been fightin' agin the Britishers, and his hands is stained with human blood. Oh what a day of sorrow ! But I'll try to bear up agin the trouble. There's a Providence in it as in all things, and I'll bow to His will !"

The poor woman wrung her withered hands in grief, and seemed scarcely equal to the condign submission which she thus apostrophized.

Job watched the anguish of his mother. It affected his simple heart, and, placing the musket against the wall, he was about to contribute to her solace, when the weapon fell to the ground. Job, in the waywardness of his defective mind, rushed in alarm to seize his battle-prize. He raised the gun, shook it, reproached it, and then turning to his mother, who, used to his habits, exhibited no astonishment, exclaimed :

"Job must find Ghoul, the sexton," and he softly approached the door.

"Stay, stay, my son," exclaimed the woman, "and don't disturb Ghoul at this time o' night."

"Job want Ghoul to bury reg'lar," replied Job, in a mysterious whisper, evidently impressed with the idea that the slain British soldier had still the power to retake the musket until his body was interred. "Ghoul 'ill find him. Ghoul 'ill bring him, and bury him in his plantation, deep, deep, deep. Nobody grow that Ghoul plant. Job's flowers come up; but Ghoul dig a long way down."

Ghoul was a neighboring sexton, whom Job, in his hours of industry, frequently assisted in his incessant occupation of grave-digging, and the poor idiot had observed that, although the seeds which he inserted in the ground all yielded their fruits in season, the bodies which Ghoul committed to the earth were never reproductive, and this he attributed to the depth of the sexton's trenches.

"Ghoul's abed," expostulated his mother; "'tis late, and he don't dig graves o' nights."

Then, as an additional lure to the froward boy, she continued :

"Come to your supper —you're tired."

"Job hungry," replied the boy.

And then, in deference to the persuasive language of his mother, and to the food which was spread upon the table, he quitted the door, and with the musket still held tightly in one hand, commenced his meal, for a time to forget all but the voracity of his hunger.

As the still troubled mother anxiously watched the appetite of her son, she heard a step upon the road. It approached their garden wicket and there halted as if in hesitation; then the gate was opened, the garden was entered, and quickly followed a summons at the door.

Job leaped up in alarm—his mother in surprise—for a visit to this lonely hut was rarely made, and never at this hour. Job knew it and prepared for the intruder. All simplicity and innocence was banished from his face, which had now assumed the ferocity of the morning. He beckoned his mother to secure herself behind him, and then leveled his musket at the opening of the door, so that he might deliver his fatal fire as it unclosed. The latch then rose, the poor woman screamed aloud, and rushed to make fast the only bolt upon the door when Job Witless, with an appalling cry, exclaimed :

"*The reg'lar !* "

The widow—so was poor Job's mother called—fell before she reached the door which flew back upon its hinges. The ruthless Job pulled the trigger of his musket, a loud report and a flash of fire succeeded, and the little dwelling was filled with smoke. The woman did not lose her energy of mind. She scrambled to her feet, and dragged herself to the entrance, fearing to see a corpse upon the threshold; but there stood the tall figure of a man, who, uncertain what might next occur, had already taken a pistol from his breast.

"My good woman," said the stranger, the moment he perceived her, not supposing that he was the object of attack, "are you in danger? Can I assist you?"

At the sound of that voice, Job uttered a scream of joy. The musket was abandoned, and fell disregarded upon the floor, while Job dashed forward to grasp the stranger's hand, exclaiming :

"Cap'n ! Cap'n !"

It was Felix Temple in search of him whom he had now found. Job had recognized the voice with a quickness of perception common to him. He drew Felix within the house, closed and bolted the door,

and introduced him, in his unique and untutored manner, to his "moder." All sat down by that fire which had ceased to sparkle—by the remnants of the humble meal. Job motioned to Felix to eat. Affected at this hospitality, Felix took a piece of bread, and Job, unaffected by the occurrences of the night, recommenced his supper. After Job had eaten to contentment, he again returned to his favorite musket. Felix then discovered that, owing to his ignorance of a gun, he had only charged it with powder.

The poor widow was recovering from her apprehensions when Felix commenced informing her that his visit was one of gratitude for the preservation of his life by the valor of her son. He then related to her the history of that day's engagement, and of the conspicuous and fearless part that Job had taken in it. The mother, who, in her isolation, had not heard of the great events of the day, listened more in dismay than pride at the exploits of her deluded boy. She feared that they had produced an excitement in his mind which it would be difficult to banish.

"Sir," said the poor woman to Felix, "poor Job's not fit for war, and I hope you've not come to make a sejer on him. He's a blessing to me—the comfort o' my life, and I guess you wouldn't take away that only brightness in my poverty."

"Fear not my good friend," said Felix, with emotion; "I would rather keep him from the field than entice him to it. I want to increase his comforts here. I have a feeling for him beyond my desire to recompense his services, and you must assist me to indulge it. I will not attempt to separate him from so kind a parent. I cannot see him clothed in those foul rags, nor his mother withered to a shadow by toil and hardship, without wishing them to share my affluence."

Felix paused to study the effect of this generous offer. The mother closed her eyes and rocked herself to and fro in her wooden chair. She seemed taking a retrospect of all the sufferings which she and Job had so long endured. After a brief time she shook her head, as if in reply to Felix. Construing this unfavorably, he continued:

"Or I have friends in this city, ladies of wealth, who know that Job has saved my life, and who are anxious to benefit both him and you. If you would admit them to your confidence, and then allow them to suggest how this wretchedness by which I see you surrounded can be amended, I will write down their address, and they will consider it a privilege to advise with you."

The skeleton face of the widow was lighted with animation as she listened to these words; pleasure beamed from her sunken eyes; the mention of the sympathizing co-operation of woman in her hopes had filled her heart with joy.

"Thank you sir," said the grateful widow. "I can't gainsay my poverty, sin' ye see it in poor Job, in this broken shanty, and in the fare upon the board. But, sir, there's difficulty in gettin' even these; and if, through the kindness o' these ladies, I could get sam'at to work upon at home, so that I should be ablas here to meet

poor Job arter his wand'rings, and give him food when he's a-hungry—which ain't alus been the case—I should feel a happiness that's bin denied to me for many a day."

Felix was affected at the emotion with which the woman spoke, for he perceived that she referred to a period of her indigence when she could not obtain even the wretched comforts now within her reach. He took a leaf from his note-book and wrote upon it the address of Agnes and Emily. No one could have told, from those smiling faces, which heart was filled with most pleasure—that of the recipient or the donor.

"But I can not quit you," said Felix, "until I have indulged my gratitude in reference to Job. Take this gold—nay, I will not listen to objections; let Job have other garments; improve his fare and his general comforts, for I take a personal interest in his welfare. I must not, however, delay my departure. Time with me is precious—morning is approaching—and I have yet to pass through the guarded entrances of Boston. Gather up the gold, I implore you. I do not offer it in charity, but in gratitude and love."

There was a struggle in the poor widow's heart. She heard Felix and looked not upon the gold but in his eye. There she read nothing but sincerity. Job, attracted by the unusual ring, approached the table, and, beholding the glittering pieces, broke a painful silence by exclaiming:

"Money!"

"Yes, money, Job," said Felix, "to buy Job clothes so that he may dress like me."

Job clapped his hands in delight, then rubbed them upon the coat of Felix, as if to enjoy the fineness of its texture. Collecting the gold from the table he poured it into his mother's lap, and commenced mercilessly destroying his own tattered garments. Felix, perceiving that his mother watched silently while Job was at the work of destruction, said:

"Can you deny your son the pleasure for which he is preparing?"

"I cannot—I will not. God bless you!" she replied.

Felix arose, grasped her cold, shriveled hand and bade her farewell. The poor woman could only shed her tears—her voice was choked.

"I must go, Job," said Felix, as the idiot held tightly his hand.

"Where?" demanded Job.

Felix hesitated, as if inclined to withhold that information, but then replied:

"To Cambridge, Job."

"Job know Cambridge," replied the poor boy.

"Then come and see me in your new clothes, good Job," said Felix.

Job uttered a cry of joy.

"Job come! Job come! Job know Cambridge," he exclaimed.

"The visitor left the hovel affected at the scene, but thankful that he had been able to afford happiness to one toward whom he felt so

mysteriously drawn. He found no difficulty in passing out of Boston. The citizens were still sleepless; and so many of its inhabitants were passing to and fro, on missions of curiosity, that he mixed with the throng, and again breathed the air of freedom without a challenge.

CHAPTER VI.

JOB'S FIRST VISIT TO A DRAWING-ROOM.

ON the departure of Temple, Job retired to his straw pallet. His impulsive mind was burdened with the decorations of the morrow; his visions were of broadcloth and gilt buttons. As soon as the sun tipped the church-spires with his beams, Job impatiently aroused his mother from her rest. Even the musket, to which a few hours before he had appeared so inordinately devoted, was laid aside; nothing now was thought of but the improvement of his person, as if the vanity of the beau were for the time his ruling passion. The room was littered with the fragments of his old garments, which he had destroyed, regardless of the fact that they served to conceal his person.

The mother and the son were in the streets of Boston at the first opening of the stores. They entered a clothier's, and the delighted Job would have robed himself in a dozen of the multitude of suits arranged for sale, putting on one over the other, had not his ardor been restrained by the assurance of his mother that the "Cap'n" wore but one. Then, having been induced to make a choice, he doffed the rags of beggary, presented them to the owner of the store, and, arrayed as Job Witless never was before, he danced forth into the street, that man, woman and child might share his admiration of himself.

The widow entered other stores and bought a few articles for her own use, when they retraced their journey homeward. The poor neighbors, seeing Job so smartly dressed, and his mother so laden, ascribed it all to the withcraft of widow Witless, within whose house, it was said, strange noises had been heard nearly all the previous night; and though some gazed with a jealous eye upon the advantages thus gained, the greater number mumbled prayers against witches, expecting every moment to see both son and mother crushed beneath the adjuration. But they passed on uninjured, and soon entered their poor dwelling.

With a diligence that would have gratified Felix had he witnessed it, Job's mother hastened to fashion such of her new things as would fit her for a visit to the address upon the card. When all was in

readiness, she and Job again quitted their shanty, ignorant of the pious wishes of her neighbors again benevolently uttered for her destruction.

With trembling hand she struck the knocker. The door was promptly opened, and the widow timidly inquired for Miss Falkland. Job stood beside his mother as if to inspire her with confidence, his tall form far above her puny figure, proud of his new clothes, new hat, and boots that wanted neither polish nor repair. He smirked, smiled, and nodded at the servant until the maiden was abashed at such inexplicable conduct.

"What name shall I give to Miss Falkland?" asked the servant.

The visitor hesitated for a moment as if she were unprepared to meet the question, and then replied, in a subdued tone:

"The—the—widow Witless."

"Witless," repeated the girl, as she cast a reproachful and indignant glance at the still gesticulating Job, as if she thought the name appropriate, at least, to one of the visitors of her mistress. She then invited them into the spacious hall, until she should receive further instructions as to their disposition.

The servant, however, quickly returned, and led the way to the parlor, where she announced that Miss Falkland would soon join them. They entered the apartment and the door closed. Job was entranced. The glossy surface of his coat, the glitter of its buttons, were forgotten in the magnificence before him. For a time he stood motionless in idiotic admiration; then he began to examine the various articles of furniture in detail.

The carpet was to him a wide field of delight. It represented numerous cornucopiæ filled with flowers, the gorgeous colors of which inspired Job with a wish to obtain the sweets from such a rich *parterre*. After he had thus fed the rapture of his eyes, he cast himself upon the floor to indulge a nearer inspection, and to roll luxuriously among their beauties, believing all the time that he inhaled the fragrance of the counterfeit flowers. When he had sufficiently indulged in this, to him, delightful pastime, he arose and continued his scrutiny. He smoothed with his hands the silken covers of the chairs and couches, pressed their receding surfaces, then sat upon their seats, and amused himself in rising and falling upon them with such alarming vigor that his mother was compelled to interfere.

He then wheeled a table upon casters about the room, raised the lids of the various Dresden scent-jars—enjoying their perfume—removed the choice vases from their brackets, and was proceeding to other investigations, when he was terrified by the appearance of a lion upon the hearth-rug. The king of the forest stood erect with open mouth, long mane, and ferocious aspect, and with his fearful eyes upon poor Job, as if to remind him—if his simple mind was capable of being so far retrospective—that this terrible sentinel had been watching him from the opening of the door.

The mother saw the agitation of her son, and went to his relief. In vain she approached the lion, trod upon his neck, placed her hand in its open mouth, and then explained that he, like the flowers, had no life but that given by the artist. Job secreted himself behind the flowing curtains of the window, and he who had fought so bravely before the well-armed foe, now shrank from the savage portrait & a woolen monster.

These horrors, however, were dispelled by the attractions of a mirror, through which, to his amazement, he distinguished another recreation as beautiful as that which he occupied. There, too, sat another mother—there stood another Job. He was clad in the same new clothes, and advanced in the same slow steps as those of Job. Each offered the other candies, and laughed and danced, and performed all the grotesque antics of each other, until Job became so fascinated with this kindred spirit that he determined to join him. Both seemed impelled by the same idea—Job and his impersonation—and both searched behind the mirror, that they might unhinge the mystic fastening that kept them asunder; but when Job failed in his utmost efforts, and again came forward chagrined at his disappointment, he saw that the same expressions of sorrow and regret clouded the visage of the other figure. Job's thoughts were active; soon a smile was again upon his face; he looked into the eye of him from whom he could no longer endure this painful separation; he saw the same idea was larking in the Dromio's mind. He raised his powerful hand—the figure did the same—that was the signal of co-operation, and Job was about to make an effort to dash asunder this mystic boundary, when his mother caught his arm, swung him round, and he found himself in the presence of two charming ladies.

These ladies were Agnes and Emily; and they smiled so sweetly and were so beautiful, that the wayward Job soon forgot the phantom of the mirror. They welcomed both the mother and the son, conducted them to another part of the room, and while Agnes encouraged the widow to speak freely upon the subject of her wishes, the merry Emily amused Job by exhibiting to him a folio of engravings, from which he selected all the battle scenes, imagining that they represented the fight in which he had won his musket.

Agnes found it comparatively easy to assist the Widow Witless in attaining the honest object of her ambition—to support herself by her own industry. All her plans, however, had relation to the comfort of her poor Job. She was desirous of employing herself in a manner that would not require her absence from home, so that she might be always present to minister either to his wants or whims. Needle-work was therefore suggested by the widow; and as Agnes and Emily were too happy to be able to assist her in any way, they commended her choice, and promised to keep her fully occupied.

The poor woman expressed her gratitude and the pleasure she enjoyed in hearing words of kindness from one of her own sex, as in her neighborhood she was avoided by those little richer than

herself, as one whose dealings in witchcraft rendered her an unfit associate.

Emily, deeply interested in Job, who had surprised her by many pertinent observations, inquired if he had been idiotic from his birth. The widow hesitated in her reply, but afterward said:

“Not from his birth—from about ten years old.”

“Was there any sudden cause for the derangement?” asked Emily.

“A fright, lady,” said the widow, with reluctance; “but ’tis painful to recall the circumstance.”

“No doubt, no doubt, my good friend,” interfered Agnes, who perceived that the woman exhibited considerable emotion; “but, I am sure that my cousin will not continue a subject of so much anguish from any idle curiosity.”

“My questions are not those of idleness,” replied Emily. “I feel deeply interested in poor Job, for his deficiencies seem to me to arise more from a suspension than an absolute loss of faculties; and now that I have ascertained that he was not born an idiot, I believe that he will not always remain one.”

“D’ye think so, madam?” replied the poor woman her face all aglow with momentary thought.

“Unquestionably I do,” replied Emily.

“What’ll do it, madam?” quickly inquired the mother.

“That involves another question,” replied Emily, “which you can answer. What caused this sudden idiocy?”

The widow looked ghastly. She stood silent for a time; then, as if thinking the question demanded some reply, said:

“I was not present, madam.”

The tender-hearted Agnes, anxious to repress a subject which occasioned the poor woman so much agitation, said:

“Dear Emily, I fear that you have awakened agonies in the heart of our poor friend, under the excitements of the past day or two, she is scarcely able to endure.”

“I have not acted thoughtlessly,” replied Emily; “I am desirous of obtaining sufficient information for a medical opinion.”

The widow seemed unconscious of the observations that passed between Agnes and Emily, when Job broke the silence by exclaiming:

“Job going to Cambridge.”

“To Cambridge!” exclaimed Emily; and then said humorously to Agnes: “Have you not some dispatches for a rebel there, and can Job aspire to be your messenger? I will answer for his trustfulness.”

Agnes blushed; the facetious Emily laughed; the widow Wilcox prepared to take her leave, and Job was still partaking of the enthusiasm of the printed battle-fields, when a servant entered to summon Agnes to Mr. Falkland in the library.

As the widow departed, however, Agnes intimated that if Job

should visit Cambridge she should be glad to see him before he quitted Boston.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAPTAIN AT HOME.

THE deeds at Lexington and Concord soon resounded through the country. Fame, with her golden horn, rushed through the air, and proclaimed the victory to city, town, and village, and the joy and enthusiasm she spread was electric. Men ceased to pursue their occupations. Some left the plow in the furrow, and turning their horses' head toward Cambridge, quitted the field for the battle-ground. Those who were thrashing in their barns marched with no other weapon than their flails upon their shoulders to the assistance of the valorous men of Massachusetts. The artisans of the towns, the laborers of the villages, and the larger boys, all fired with the love of liberty, seized the weapons most destructive within their grasp, and hastened to array themselves beneath the banner so gloriously unfurled. These rapturous volunteers were cheered on their way by the women and girls, who stood at roadside offering them refreshments, while the children waved their flags and added their cries to the general exultation.

The stalwart sons of Connecticut and Rhode Island advanced in support of the principles of their Puritan fathers, while from the green hills of Vermont and New Hampshire descended the mountain boys, eager to be among the earliest to draw a sword for what man by instinct esteems so precious. It is impossible to portray the ardor of these willing soldiers. Some rode to the rendezvous on their fleetest horses, some ran, and when they could no longer maintain that pace, they walked at a rate exhausting under less exciting circumstances. Years and grey hairs were forgotten. Old age assumed the suppleness of youth; boys were elevated to the rank of men—all burning to avenge the slaughter of Lexington, and to share in such victories as were commenced at Concord.

Thus, two days after the triumph, twenty thousand men had assembled at Cambridge. On the 5th of May, with this number enrolled as the army of America, the colony of Massachusetts withdrew from its allegiance to the British monarch.

One of the most enthusiastic of these volunteers was Felix Temple. He was appointed to a company. Si Brambles, having determined to continue his military career, begged to be permitted to serve under him, and to his great joy became his Lieutenant. Felix now made every effort to render those under his command efficient soldiers, in which he found an able coadjutor in Si. The company became rapid

proficients in field exercises. While thus employed on duty, Temple felt uneasy in reference to Mr. Falkland. He was aware of the old gentleman's unsettled principles, and feared that if he felt *compelled* to adopt a policy it would be that of the British, unless the influence of Agnes and Emily should neutralize the labors of the English officers who visited at the house. What an abyss, he thought, would this create between Agnes and himself. Her devotion he could not doubt; but her position with the enemy he disliked. There was, however, no remedy, and resting all his hopes upon the faithfulness of her heart, he endeavored to perform those duties which he had undertaken. Thus some weeks passed. Si Brambles was absent on leave, in order to make a few arrangements at his homestead. Job Witless had not appeared at Cambridge; but this he ascribed to the difficulty of leaving Boston. No military movement had taken place on either side; although strange rumors floated from camp to camp, it was believed that nothing would be done. The Americans were improving in discipline while the British were waiting the arrival of reinforcements.

One day Captain Temple saw advancing toward his quarters Si Brambles—who had returned the day before—accompanied by a tall, well-dressed man. Both entered his tent and then Felix recognized Job Witless.

"Ah, Job, my friend," he exclaimed, rising and grasping his hand. "I thought myself abandoned by my old field companions. Si Brambles has been absent several days; you as many weeks; while I have been wandering about the camp in much lamentation and little hope."

"Well, Cap'n," said Si, "you know that I went for a fortnight, and comed back in seven days. But, as for Job Witless, why I guess he's bin on a visit to Gov'nor Gage, he's dressed so mighty killin'."

Job, clad in his new suit, stood erect, his person tall and his features handsome, and but for a vacant look and restlessness that never left his countenance except in cases of extreme excitement, would have been a person to arrest attention. He now regarded the dress referred to so humorously by Si, and then said:

"Job come from Boston."

"How is your mother, Job?" asked Felix.

"Moder well—ladies well," replied Job.

"What ladies?" asked Felix, in surprise, for he thought only of Agnes and Emily.

"Boston ladies," responded Job.

Felix was disappointed. He had hoped to have heard something of a lady in his heart. Si smiled, and laughingly remarked:

"I s'pose you've bin with the ladies in them fine clothes?"

"Yes," quickly replied Job.

"What ladies?" pursued Si.

"Cap'n's ladies," answered Job.

Si Brambles said no more. He abandoned further inquiry to the

one whom it concerned, he being present, and left to perform some duty he affected to have forgotten. Felix, certain that Job made reference to Agnes, asked :

“Are those ladies quite well, Job, and did either of them send to me?”

“Yes, in Job pocket,” replied he; and Job took the opportunity to exhibit to Felix the several depositories of the kind contained in his new clothes, without comprehending the pain this trifling caused. When this display terminated, Job fumbled at the pocket supposed to contain all the hopes of Felix; but when he had prepared to fold the letter to his lips, the idiot pulled forth one of the battle scenes which had so delighted him at Mr. Falkland’s, and which Emily had presented to him. Poor Job was greatly disappointed that Felix should appreciate so little what enchanted him so greatly, and then commenced another search in his ample pockets. Felix felt no interest in this second investigation; but when Job pulled forth a letter, he grasped it, placed it to his heart, and then opened it with more impatience than Job had betrayed over the engraving. It was from Agnes. The officer was soon oblivious to the outer world’s proceedings.

Job wondered at the abstraction occasioned by a piece of paper on which he could discern no battle; but he for a time amused himself with the glitter of the various weapons, and then perceiving Si Brambles peep into the tent to see if the Captain was at liberty, they marched off together.

Felix was aroused from his rapture to find Job gone. However, he was not absent long, and after they had partaken a comfortable meal, Felix endeavored to amuse him in such a manner that the occasional introduction of the subject of Agnes was rather pleasing to him; but the developments gave Felix but little satisfaction, for from him he learned that the British officers were often at Mr. Falkland’s; that Agnes was sad when one of them was there and sometimes when he was not.

Nothing could be more bitter to him than this intelligence. It seemed to him plain that Mr. Falkland desired Agnes to receive the visits of some British officer. Alarmed at this conviction, and maddened at the thought of a rival, he determined to enter Boston at every hazard and learn from her own lips the true state of affairs. With this view he questioned Job as to the means employed to escape the vigilance by which it was reported that Boston was now guarded, and found that he had passed through from the belief of his perfectly inoffensive character. Felix then inquired if the sentinels would permit him to enter the city; but the idiot shook his head, put on a serious air, and said :

“Reg’lars very bad now—only kind to Job.”

The poor fellow seemed so disinclined to converse upon the question, and so unwilling to think that Felix would attempt to deceive guards so stern and so unscrupulous, that the subject was allowed to drop.

Felix, however, sought Si Brambles, whom he knew to be able to

render him assistance. Si was amazed at such imprudence, though he did not so express himself.

"I want no advice, Si," said Felix, "I am resolved upon the venture. Can you assist me?"

"I never gives my advice in them cases," replied Si; "when 'tis love, I know it must have its way; but to cross Boston Neck is about as dangerous a road as I knows just now."

"Can you suggest any means by which I can avoid absolute detection by the guards?" asked Felix. "I do not expect to achieve my desire without danger."

"Yes," said Si. "There's Billy Waters, the milkman, who goes there every evenin', and per'aps he'd take you as his help."

Felix was delighted at the suggestion. It seemed free from risk than any thing he could devise, and Si reluctantly undertook to consult with the milkman on the following morning. Felix retired that night to his couch with the hope of seeing, on the morrow, his devoted Agnes, without estimating the peril of the adventure.

Si Brambles, true to his undertaking, departed in search of his friend, and he contrived to prevail on Job to accompany him, that he might induce the idiot to return home, before the execution of the plan. All things prospered. The integrity of Will Waters fell before the diplomacy of Si Brambles and Felix Temple's gold, and the following evening the latter commenced his approach to the British lines in the lowly character of a vender of Will Waters' milk.

Felix drove the wagon while Will stood in readiness to answer questions and serve the milk. Thus they passed the grim sentinels and the guard-house unchallenged and unheeded when Felix, leaping from his chariot, soon disappeared in the crazy streets of Boston, first arranging to return with the gallant Will early the approaching morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

WOODED BUT NOT WON.

On the day in which the lovely Agnes gave audience to the widow Witleas, her father was closeted with Colonel Bland, a British officer, as brave and talented in the field as specious and insinuating in the drawing-room. He was young, handsome, unmarried, and was a frequent visitor at Mr. Falkland's. In his attentions to Agnes and Emily, there was no perceptible difference, though he sometimes appeared to listen with greater pleasure to the graceful sentiments of Agnes, than to the merriment of her cousin. There was, however, a heart interest in the soldier's attentions, which he had unfolded to

Mr. Falkland that morning. The Colonel loved Agnes. Mr. Falkland was unprepared for such a revelation. He preferred the Colonel—the loyal to the rebel soldier; but that would not give him victory. Mr. Falkland, therefore, in reply, acknowledged the flattering honor—said something of the merits, position, and personal advantages of the Colonel, which he hoped would tend to soften the rugged truth which had to be unveiled, and then reluctantly declared the previous engagement of his daughter.

The gallant soldier leaped from the leathern chair in which he had so gracefully reclined. He had not received a greater shock even when making his first charge. Involuntarily he exclaimed :

“Impossible!”

Mr. Falkland could only utter a groan of confirmation.

“I have been a frequent visitor at your house,” continued the Colonel, “and have become almost a family companion; but I have not seen nor heard of a suitor to your daughter, and thus have I allowed her virtues to eat into my heart to my own destruction.” Then hesitating a few minutes he added : “But can I be permitted to see Agnes?”

The old gentleman implored him to be composed, but his agitation was so great that he concealed his face in his hands. Mr. Falkland knew not what comfort to administer; both sat motionless, in silence, until the Colonel again repeated his question :

“Can I see Agnes?”

“Yes, I will promise that,” replied Mr. Falkland.

“Now, this minute?” exclaimed the impetuous visitor.

“No; I must prepare her. Come in the afternoon,” said Mr. Falkland.

The hour was then eleven. It seemed to the Colonel an age to afternoon.” He made no remark, but rising, he quitted the room.

When Agnes entered the library, her father sat by the fire, his head bowed with sorrow. He pointed to the seat opposite. It was that so recently occupied by Colonel Bland. She sought his side :

“Father, what agitates you thus? Your head is heated, your countenance flushed, and you can scarcely support yourself from trepidation. What has occasioned such anguish?”

“I am better, dear Agnes,” said her father; “sit by my side. I want to speak to you. Colonel Bland has been here.”

“Father, your source of pain is not in Colonel Bland,” said Agnes. “He is too much your friend and ours to occasion us misery.”

“He wanted to see you, Agnes,” continued Mr. Falkland.

“Why not have summoned me before he left, dear father?” said Agnes; “you know how ready we all are to please him. But, do not seek to conceal your grief. Tell your daughter what afflicts you?”

“The Colonel will return at two; then you must see him,” persevered Mr. Falkland.

"Most certainly and with pleasure," said Agnes. "Now let me share your sorrows. Reveal to me the cause of all this agitation."

"I share but the sufferings of Colonel Bland," replied Mr. Falkland.

"Has calamity indeed overtaken one so gallant, so brave?" said Agnes, with sympathy. "Are his misfortunes of a nature that we can alleviate?"

"Would you assist in doing so, dear Agnes," said Mr. Falkland, with hope glistening in his eye, "if within your power?"

"Yes, dear father," said Agnes, energetically, "with all my heart."

Mr. Falkland watched his daughter narrowly, and, struck with the force of her manner, in his eagerness he interpreted it wrongly, and exclaimed:

"Enough, Agnes, enough. He loves you."

This terrible avowal came like a dagger-thrust to the heart of Agnes. She sought a denial in her father's eye, but there read confirmation. Falling upon her knees, she exclaimed:

"Oh, father, father, what can you mean? You surely would not teach your daughter perjury. Her, whom you have ever instructed in the love of truth. Oh, my father, would you tutor me to discard those hallowed lessons which I received conjointly from you and my dear mother, and which I have cherished as her most sacred gifts? You would not have me unsteadfast in those principles of honor and faith which your counsels planted in my mind? If such thought be the cause of your affliction, awaken from the delusion."

At this moment the door of the library was burst open, and in haste and confusion Colonel Bland entered the apartment. Agnes was still upon her knees with upraised hands, and her father had sunk back in his chair apparently overpowered by the force and sentiment of her appeal. The colonel, astonished at the scene, cried:

"Agnes—Miss Falkland—I was not aware of your presence here. I crave pardon. When I quitted your father he was alone, and I expected to find him so when I entered."

Agnes had arisen. The tears were dashed from her face, and the crimson mounted to her temples as she calmly and coldly said:

"No apology is needed, Colonel Bland. This is my father's room to which you, as his very intimate friend, have access. I am summoned here to be informed by my father that you desire to speak with me."

The Colonel hesitated.

"The period named was this afternoon," said the Colonel; "I returned to ascertain the hour."

"The hour has arrived," said Agnes, with a calm dignity. "It is now—this minute."

The astonished Briton deemed her ignorant of the object of the interview, else she would not insist upon it in the presence of a third party. He therefore replied:

“I have that to say, Miss Falkland, which I beg I may be permitted to speak in private.”

“It can not be sir,” replied the inflexible Agnes.

The Colonel no longer hesitated. Mr. Falkland still lounged in his easy-chair, deeply affected by the appeal of Agnes before the Colonel's entrance, and apparently only half conscious of what was passing. The suitor commenced :

“The cause of my desire to see you may or may not have transpired, for I named it to your father but an hour since. It is now to avow that those virtues and that loveliness which are so eminently yours, so occupy my heart that I asked permission of my friend, your father, to prefer my humble claims to your heart and hand.”

“And my father replied?” gasped Agnes, who was so much agitated that she supported herself with difficulty.

“Your father referred to some previous obligation,” continued the Colonel; “but the intensity of my love forbids me to think that another can command your admiration, your—”

“Ungenerous man, thus to inflict a needless pain!” interposed Agnes. “My father, desirous of shielding his daughter's feelings, revealed to you enough to inspire a magnanimous man with silence. Both might then have been spared much anguish, for I can only repeat what has already been pronounced by my father.”

“Agnes, forbear,” exclaimed the Colonel; “temper your reproaches with more mercy, and afford me a dispassionate hearing. I have been a frequent visitor at your house—the friend of your father, the associate of yourself and cousin. I esteem these honors the greatest privilege of my life. I almost daily saw you, and my heart was as frequently impressed with some new charm. I cherished these feelings until they became too mighty for my breast. I saw none treated with greater distinction than myself. I heard of no successful rival in your heart; and, unable longer to restrain my emotions, I sought permission of your father to address you. His reply distracted me; but I yet hope to be relieved from the frenzy which torments my mind, and the terrible pangs which lacerate my heart, by hearing you admit that the selection is not irrevocable.”

The heart of Agnes yielded during this appeal. Her sternness relaxed, a smile of sorrow and of suffering rested on her countenance; a feeling of tenderness evidently had defeated the anger which she had displayed. The Colonel saw the change; hope kindled in his bosom, and he was about to approach near to the object of his love, but he paused at the sweet accents of her voice, that he might not lose a syllable she uttered.

“When you entered this room,” said Agnes, “I was kneeling at my dear father's feet. You saw me there, and could but judge that I was in supplication, I was imploring him not, by any influence of his, to endeavor to subvert the pledge I had given to another, for with it was my heart, my faith, and all my hope of happiness on earth. Need I say more to you than to relate this? Yes, something more is required—your

pardon for my harshness, and my withdrawal of the hasty charge that I alleged against you of ungenerous conduct."

The Colonel was speechless—Agnes was in great suffering. Seeing that her father was recovering from his apathy, she opened a side-door and disappeared. The Colonel, beholding her about to quit his presence, exclaimed:

"Agnes! Agnes! one other word!"

But the door precipitately closed, and even in his madness he dared not attempt to pass it. Throwing himself in despair into the chair, he moaned:

"O God, she has rejected me!"

Mr. Falkland, aroused at the poignant sufferings of his friend, placed his hand kindly upon the shoulder of the Colonel as he said:

"My friend, this is but one of the little tragedies of life; be equal to it. I love my daughter with all the affection of a parent, but I lament the preference which I can not control."

"Tell me," exclaimed the bewildered Colonel, "who is this favored suitor?"

"A Mr. Felix Temple," replied Mr. Falkland.

"Where is he to be found?" he demanded.

"Yonder—in the American camp—at Cambridge," said Mr. Falkland.

"What!" exclaimed the Colonel, in amazement; "*a rebel leader!* Oh, Agnes, Agnes, what infatuation has guided thee thus to misdirect the affections of thy heart? I would not cause thee a moment's sorrow, but I swear upon my sword, that if ever I and this favored rebel meet, King George shall have an enemy the less, and you—fairest of the fair—be open to another suitor."

CHAPTER IX.

THE INCANTATION.

A few weeks after this event, Agnes sat in her private room. The evening was cold, the fire was burning brightly, and the couch was drawn toward the cheerful flame. Sorrow had made its impress on her placid face. She gazed upon the embers, as if to detect some omen of good from their sparkling brilliancy. The apartment, however, was soon invaded by light and rapid steps. The Ariel tread informed the thoughtful Agnes that Emily approached.

"Ah, seer Agnes," said her cousin, as she reached the couch, "what read you in that heated book from which you are so intently studying?"

"I was but looking upon the lights and shadows of the burning

embers—how vivid the one—how dark and portentous the other—how inconstant and wavering both, and was comparing them to the vicissitudes of life—”

“Fudge!” interposed Emily. “That is philosophy worthy of the gray-beards, but not of you nor I. It is the necromantic branch you should study in those flames—one that unseals the future.”

“The present bitterness is enough for me, Emily,” replied Agnes; “let the future remain unknown.”

“But it might be a casket of happiness, dear Agnes,” suggested Emily.

“Then, Emily, I wish not to enjoy my good fortune by anticipation said Agnes.

“But to return to the fire, Agnes,” continued Emily. “It is absolutely rich in prediction. I perceive the marches and countermarches of troops—fierce in countenance and vehement in gesticulation. Very warlike, but no positive fighting. Why don’t they take Boston—and us? Why, there is Felix—Felix Temple—not only his face but his whole body is in the fire. Indeed, he is impersonated in such a conflagration that I can not distinguish the flame in his heart, which, of course, ought to be the most glowing portion. Shall I call him? Shall I summon him? Shall I use my incantations to bring him to your feet? Agnes, fair cousin, answer me, and I will commence.”

“I think I may venture to permit the exercise of all the magic art which you possess without fearing either consequence or injury,” replied Agnes, smiling through her grief at the vagaries of her cousin.

“Then I will at once proceed,” said Emily; “but let me warn you that I shall summon my agents from regions where brimstone is the prevalent odor. They will be invisible, but you will be made aware of their presence through your nostrils instead of your eyes. You will please to use a corresponding discretion in your speech, as I would not have reproaches uttered in their presence reflecting upon a characteristic of their place of residence.”

Agnes smiled, but made no reply. Emily, with affected gravity, commenced her preparations. She retired to an adjoining room, and soon reappeared, wearing a loose silk dressing-gown, which descended to the floor. A many-colored shawl was wound around her head, in the fashion of a turban. A long, white wand was in her hand. She removed a circular iron vessel—used commonly for wood, but which was now empty—to the center of the room, placed inside it a burning brand taken from the fire. On this she cast a dust which produced a bluish light, muttering cabalistic words as she proceeded. She truly looked the sorceress—one of surpassing beauty. Moving the wand around the flame, she sung:

Come, hags, around my caldron prance;
Come, elfs, within my circle dance;
Fairies and demons—satyrs—all
Obey the magic of my call.”

"We come!" responded a sepulchral voice. At the same instant, the cunning Emily so liberally refreshed her fire with the magician's powder that the thin metallic vessel in which they burnt rung with their crackling, the flames rose high, and the sulphuric odor of the distinguished visitors was almost beyond endurance.

"Cease this folly," cried Agnes, affected by the vapor in the room; but the assumed enchantress, resolved upon the completion of her spell, exclaimed, in a deep and solemn voice:

"Silence, maiden, or you will cause your own destruction."

Then waving her wand over and around the caldron, she thus resumed her incantation:

"Now, screech-owls of the misty night,
On wings and broomsticks take your flight,
And summon from yon tents of war
One Felix Temple to our bar.
Presto—fly—be quick—begone!
In one minute go and come!"

A whiz passed through the room, as if heavy bodies were mounting in the air, the lively flame subsided, the stench abated, and Emily, in her gown and turban, stood gravely pointing with her wand to a watch upon the mantel, the second hand of which was racing toward the appointed goal. Even Agnes was not uninfluenced by these occurrences. The solemnity of the scene, the inflexible severity of Emily's countenance, produced a terror which she could not control, and which was rendered more intense by the short period allotted to the consummation of this fearful embassy. When the index had only about twelve seconds to traverse, Emily suddenly fixed her gaze upon her cousin—who seemed now to shrink from her penetrating earnestness—and sung the following:

"Now, young maiden, rise—prepare!
Your favored suitor's on the stair.
Felix, APPEAR!"

The last words of Emily were uttered at the same instant that the index of the time-piece had registered the limited minute: simultaneously the door of the apartment opened, and the well-known form of the young soldier, so magically cited, responded to the call. The ladies were dismayed, and screamed in terror. Emily now cast from her hand the fearful wand, the spiral turban fell from her head, and with the ample robe still clinging to her figure—the only insignia of her power retained—she clasped her arms around the equally affrighted Agnes.

Felix was no less astonished than alarmed. He perceived disorder in the room as well as terror in the ladies. The room, too, was still dense with a sulphuric atmosphere but little suited to a dainty nostril; and, in the center, stood the unwieldy caldron, containing mouldering embers, while upon the carpet were strewn the wand and turban, and on Emily was the grotesque robe. His first im-

pulse was to allay the fears of Agnes. He advanced to assure her of his presence, but found the ladies so closely entwined that the necromatic mantle covered both.

"Agnes, sweet Agnes," he said, "it is I—Felix. Whatever danger may have besieged you, it is dispelled. I will defend you with my life."

Agnes spoke not, but Emily, with her face concealed in the bosom of her cousin, exclaimed, in accents scarcely audible :

"Felix Temple, tell me truly, are you in flesh or but in shadow?"

"What mean you, Emily?" asked Felix, in wonder.

"Reply not by questions," said Emily. "Tell me, also, how you came here, and if high in the air and by fiendish guidance. Speak quickly, Felix, and relieve us from the terrors we endure."

"Look up, Emily," replied the astonished Felix, "and behold me; but to reassure you, I am here in my own person. I came by the Neck of Boston, where I eluded the guards that I might spend an hour with my dearest Agnes."

Emily arose from the couch. Her merry face had never been so ghastly. Felix grasped her hand, but it was cold as marble, and a tremor shook her frame. He led her to a chair and returned to Agnes, who was apparently insensible. She soon, however, recovered her self-possession, for there was more of witchery in the love which Felix whispered in her ear, than there was of magic in the words pronounced by Emily over the fiery caldron, though the latter was the greater victim to her own delusion.

When Agnes had fully revived, and Emily had surmounted some of her most distressing feelings, the former related to Felix the manner in which Emily had been occupied on his arrival; and, in return, he explained the expedient he had employed to gain admittance to the city—that, on calling at their residence he had learned from the servant that Mr. Falkland was from home, and that Agnes and Emily were in their private parlor and had presumed to introduce himself unannounced.

Thus Felix had appeared at the door of the apartment at the precise moment when the accredited friends of Emily were instructed to produce him—a coincidence not only frightfully alarming to the fair enchantress who thus dextrously wielded the magician's wand, but also to the timorous Agnes, neither of whom was prepared for so literal a sequel.

Agnes, with Felix by her side, soon regained her wonted happiness; but those roses which had been banished from the cheeks of Emily upon the appearance of the specter of her incantation did not return, and she soon asked permission to retire.

Then did Felix pour into the ear of Agnes words of love made eloquent by absence, and upon the cheek of the faithful Agnes could be seen the coy blush of maidenhood, which revealed the unspoken language that struggled in her breast. He referred to her letter which he had received in camp—its tender pathos, so genial to his soul; but he also acknowledged that the somewhat incoherent state-

ments made by her simple messenger on a topic on which she seemed scrupulously silent, had induced him to brave the British guard and seek her presence.

Agnes, without concealment, now related the painful circumstances as they transpired. She added that her father had not since renewed the subject, that Colonel Bland continued a visitor at the house as the friend of her father; but that he had not expressed a desire to see either Emily or herself.

Felix listened to the narrative with varied feelings. He saw, with the perceptive jealousy of love, that the preference of the father was with the British Colonel, and feared that, beneath the continued intimacy of his martial rival with Mr. Falkland, there was some scheme inimical to his relations with his betrothed. He could not tell her this, as it would seem to implicate her father—an injustice she would resent, even toward him. He therefore secretly resolved to meet Will Waters at the time assigned, and to defer his departure until the following night, in order that he might either boldly defy this rejected Briton, or seek an interview with Mr. Falkland on the subject. He therefore affected to dismiss the Colonel from his thoughts, and to rest his happiness solely on the truth of his beloved Agnes.

In the mean time un pitying Time had been urging forward the hours of joyousness, until one of anguish was overtaken—that of departure. Vows of undying love were exchanged, their hearts echoed the language of their tongues, and Felix and Agnes separated.

CHAPTER X.

THE COMBAT AND THE CAPTURE.

COLONEL BLAND, like many other distinguished Captains had been defeated on a field where he had anticipated victory. Nature had been so bountiful to him that he was considered, in society, handsome; and his accomplished valet, in a daily elaborate toilet, so improved these graces by his art, that, at length, when he issued from his dressing-room, no groom could take exception to his treatment. This personal elegance triumphed over his better judgment, and made him egregiously vain. He had long been a great admirer of Agnes Falkland, though his English prejudices forbade the selection of a colonial wife; but, increased knowledge only occasioned increased love; and, dismissing his scruples, he avowed to Mr. Falkland, in the full assurance of acceptance, that love for Agnes which he could no longer conceal.

The reply of Mr. Falkland was a terrible surprise; but the subse-

quent rejection and rebuke of Agnes, though qualified when she perceived his intense feelings and distress, quite deprived him of his peace of mind. He had long struggled to overcome his pride and prejudice, and now he saw the fruit of his suit—the offer of his hand rejected, if not scorned! Humiliation, rage, and the agony of disappointed love—all, in turns, agitated his mind, and he vowed a vengeance on the rival suitor—which, even in his calmer moments, he would not recall, for his only hope of Agnes was in his rival's death.

After some days of mental torture he again visited Mr. Falkland, extracted from that gentleman the expression that he would prefer his alliance to that of Felix; but, that he loved his daughter so devoutly, that he should yield unreservedly to her preference.

Colonel Bland no longer sought the society of Agnes, but he maintained the same friendly intimacy with her father, without neglecting to watch sedulously if the young rebel's love would tempt him to risk the vigilance of the British guards in order to visit her. But he detected nothing, and had ceased to regard it as a channel of revenge, when, one evening, his servant, who had been with a note to Mr. Falkland, stated to the Colonel on his return that a stranger was there inquiring for the father, and, on being answered that he was from home, proceeded to seek his daughter.

Vengeance flamed in the eyes of the Colonel as he made his servant repeat, with greater accuracy, every word and action which had transpired, together with the height, size, and appearance of the stranger, with as much preciseness as if the Colonel contemplated his enlistment. When he was fully satisfied, and the servant was dismissed, he examined his sword, drew it from its scabbard, felt its temper and the sharpness of its point, then, smiling grimly, as if he were content with its fitness for immediate duty, he replaced it in its sheath. Throwing an ample cloak over his person to conceal the brilliancy of his attire, he left his quarters, and proceeded in the direction of Mr. Falkland's, muttering to himself:

“If this be the young rebel Temple—and the instincts of my heart so tells me—let him take his last adieu of the fair Agnes, who, in her love for him, so angrily bade farewell to me; for, by this good blade, they never meet again!”

When Felix issued from the residence of Agnes, he found that he had slightly exceeded the hour which Will Waters had appointed. The night was delightful; but, although the moon pursued her mysterious course in all her radiance, none availed themselves of her light to thread the city streets. They seemed abandoned, and he, alone. He, however, crossed to the shady side, and was hastening to the rendezvous, when he was intercepted by a tall figure in a cloak, who exclaimed:

“Captain Felix Temple, I presume.”

Felix did not reply. He was so astounded at being recognized where he thought his presence was unknown, that he could not speak.

“You are surprised and agitated,” continued the speaker, “the

boldest men are troubled in detection. But we are watchful soldiers, although we assume indifference; if we admit an enemy within our garrison, we guard him jealously."

This implied treachery in Will Waters. Felix was apprehensive that he had been followed to the house of Mr. Falkland, and might thus compromise that gentleman with the British. But, while he still revolved these matters in his anxious mind, the stranger proceeded with his irony:

"You are uninstructed in military usages in war if you imagine that belligerent officers can enter our camp with greater impunity than certain other visitors who have not escaped the rope."

"Sir," exclaimed Felix, in indignation, grasping his sword, "do you reflect upon my honor as an American officer? I acknowledge that you have pronounced my name; that I passed your sentinels by a stratagem which you may have detected; but I deny that I have any military object. I was attracted to the city by very different motives."

"Motives, sir," replied the stranger, more sternly, "are so deeply hidden in men's breasts, that a court-martial gives no credence to such spurious evidence. It forms its judgment upon the plain facts before it, and quickly delivers its prisoner either to liberty or the provost-marshal. You are here, sir, a leader of those pugnacious gentlemen assembled at Cambridge. You perambulate our city in disguise, study our weak points, ascertain our force, and, when the stealthy hour of midnight arrives, you attempt to quit the city by the same scheme by which you entered it. At this crisis you are detected, and the substance of your defense is your motives."

"I will no longer abide this taunting," exclaimed Felix, in anger, "nor will I be taken prisoner by a single person."

"Nor will I attempt to secure you, for I have confidence in your motives."

"Then let me pass," exclaimed the exasperated Felix.

"I have no thought of denouncing you," said the stranger, his visage now assuming the darkness of revenge. "You came here to visit Agnes Falkland. I am jealous of your interest in that fair maiden's heart. I love her! Ay, that's right—put your hand upon your sword—summon mettle for the fray, for Felix Temple or Lenox Bland shall this night learn forgetfulness of all earthly loves."

"Draw!" said Felix, as he heard the name of his rival. "I have a heart full of vengeance as yours is full of villainy."

"Harsh words, young soldier," replied the Colonel; "but I will drench them in your blood."

"Draw!" again exclaimed the impatient Felix, perceiving that the Colonel had made no preparation to defend himself.

"What! in the public street, where you may be succored before you are half way to the grave?" replied the Colonel, resuming his ironical manner. "Why, notwithstanding these barrel doors, drawn curtains, lightless windows, and other signs of slumber, hundreds of rebels are secretly plotting behind this false scenery in what manner

they can assist their dear friends at Cambridge. No, I will conduct you to a place adapted for such work, where the somber willow flourishes, and where it awaits its uses."

The Colonel led and Felix followed. He walked rapidly. It was evident that he was not less athirst for combat than his antagonist. They reached a small grove, and Felix observed that the trees were drooping willows. The Colonel did not speak. He placed himself in the center of the open space and drew his sword.

The fight commenced. Both were tall, active, and good swordsmen; but Felix acted more on the defensive than his rival, who, at first, conceived he had an easy victim, though he soon became undeceived. The arena was a small, open space, upon which the moon shone with undiminished splendor, while the stately and gloomy trees, as they cast their shadows upon the sward, seemed to spread it with the pall of death. The fierce eyes of the combatants rivalled in fiery polish the brightness of their swords. They fought like tigers. Not a sound arose from that solemn spot but the continued clash of their deadly swords. They were gallant but implacable foes, and death to one seemed inevitable, when fortune smiled on the Colonel, as Felix, in taking a backward step, placed his foot upon the out-cropping root of the nearest tree, and fell upon one knee. A ghastly smile made hideous the face of his antagonist, as, placing his sword in an instant to his heart, he cried, exultingly:

"Die!"

It was the first word that had been uttered during that frantic conflict, and was an awful sound in that grim place of death, as it seemed to reverberate from tree to tree.

But a hand more powerful than the victor's—though strengthened in revenge—unseen, and from behind, arrested the fatal thrust just as the sword had touched the breast of Felix. The enraged Colonel was hurled several yards from his intended victim.

Furiously he turned upon this irresistible assailant, determined that the vengeance which had been thus averted from Felix should be visited upon the intruder, when he encountered the stare of the idiot, Witless. He had scarce time to recover from his amazement when other forms appeared, more formidable than Job. They composed the provost-marshal's guard, who, having heard the distant ring of swords as they passed from street to street, marched toward the spot.

Job Witless was also with them, for the occupation suited his wild fancy; and, being unrestrained by military discipline, he dashed forward before the others, followed the sounds which first attracted the guard, beheld the combatants, and restrained the hand of the savage Colonel as he was about to plunge his antagonist into eternity.

The guard at once surrounded Felix; but, as the Colonel was well known, his arrest was not pursued. As he sheathed his untarnished sword, he cast a look of malignant triumph upon his less fortunate rival, as if he intimated that he had only escaped a death which was his due by the laws of chivalry, for the chance of one less worthy

the courage and character of a soldier. The officer of the guard, with military promptitude, quickly marched his company from the ground; but, as he retired, the Colonel joined him, recommended the safe custody of his prisoner, and then, in a subdued tone, revealed that he was one of those rebel leaders, for whose capture, Governor Gage might not feel ungrateful.

The Colonel then directed his steps to his sumptuous quarters. Felix was guarded to his lonely prison; but John Witless, who was thought so fitful, so undesigning, still marched with the picket; while a ray of reason, struggling with the darkness of his mind—as the sunbeam tries to penetrate the mist—taught him to watch an opportunity to afford assistance to his patron, Felix.

The guard-house was reached. Felix was conveyed to the strong room; the iron door was closed—he was there to await the dangers of the morning.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESCAPE.

WHEN Felix first entered his gloomy room, he sat down upon a chair, which, with a small table, furnished the apartment. But, agitation of mind would not permit inertness of body. He soon arose and walked rapidly up and down the narrow cell. Several hours were thus occupied, until the candle, which he had been allowed upon his entrance, was nearly consumed. Not a sound met his ear but the heavy tread of the sentinel, as he marched the length of the corridor, as if he had other victims intrusted to his vigilance. Once or twice Felix tried his door; but it was as steadfast as a wall of adamant, and he contemplated his position almost without a hope.

In this state of desolation he was standing with his back against the wall, looking toward those apertures which in day admitted the light, when he distinctly heard a step upon the floor of the corridor. It approached the door, and was as stealthy as if it were one who sought to perpetrate a crime. The thoughts of Felix reverted to the vengeance of his rival—to his mocking courtesy—to his murderous looks; and he prepared to receive him. He had no weapon but his dagger—his sword he had been compelled to surrender. Resolving to gain some advantage by situation, he placed himself behind the door, that he might rush upon his foe if he dared to enter. The footsteps, however, paused as the sentry turned in the corridor to retrace his path; but, when again the soldier's back was toward the door, the bolt was shot from its wicket in the wall, as silently as if

muffled, the door opened only a few inches, and was as quickly and noiselessly closed.

Felix, with his drawn dagger, stood amazed. Nothing visible had entered—nothing perceptible to the eye had retreated—the soldier still paced his marble walk—the steps which had awakened the suspicions of Felix were no longer heard. Felix was somewhat awed by the mystery of the circumstance; but, as the light was flickering in the socket of the candlestick, and fringed the room in restless light and shade, he wished to attribute the apparent motion of the door to an illusion. Endeavoring thus to satisfy his troubled mind, he perceived from the dying flutter of his candle, just inside the room, a coil of rope.

He gazed upon it for a moment, then his fine countenance brightened; hope again entered his tortured mind. In a moment he placed the table and chair beneath the window, vaulted upon the former, scrambled up the back of the latter, and was examining one of those pigmy apertures which in prisons are called windows. It would scarcely permit the passage of the body of a man, and was secured by strong iron bars. But this was a slight impediment to a desperate man. He wrung them from their fastenings in the wall, and securing the rope, fixed it so that it would hold secure the line while he was descending.

All being in readiness, he took a few moments for reflection. The moon had set, and the night was dark. He could not see the ground on which he was preparing to alight. He had ascended several flights of stairs to reach his cell, and he knew not whether the rope were long enough to reach the earth. His desperate position, however, required a bold attempt for deliverance. With these thoughts to encourage him he forced himself through the resisting orifice and launched upon his aerial voyage.

All was silent below as Felix swung from that prison-window. A light was visible here and there upon the water, but nothing to produce alarm. He descended with caution until he reached a window similar to his own. The first stage, he thought, had been accomplished. Here he noiselessly rested, and endeavored to ascertain how far he had yet to go, and whether any friend was near to aid him further. If he had no friend to welcome him, there seemed no enemy to stay his steps. Just launching out from his resting-place, a slight noise met his ear.

He paused. It was not repeated; but, he was confident of some movement. Haste was the only remedy, and he resumed his descent though with less confidence. He had scarcely quitted the window when the sounds were again heard. Looking upward he perceived a figure grimly looking down, his fiery eyes shining even in the darkness. He was detected! The figure spoke not; but, seizing upon the rope shook it with violence, and perceiving that Felix still clung with fearful tenacity to the cord, he gathered some stones and mortar from the building and showered down these missiles on his head, still practicing his iniquity in silence. The position of Felix

was most imminent. His strength could not long struggle against this double assault. A rush of terrible thoughts passed through his mind. He felt certain that none but a fiend would thus assail him; that the rope was but a temptation; and that if the villain who thus pursued his barbarous pastime had not prepared some frightful fate below, he would not thus silently endeavor to shake him from his only refuge.

Despite the brutality of his speechless foe, Felix still clung to the rope. He had passed a second window and was still descending when he reached the end of the rope, but did not touch the earth. It was a moment of horror. A demoniac gibbering reached his ear from his tormentor, as if in exultation that the crisis had arrived. His hands, already lacerated with the cord, could no longer sustain him. Again unsuccessfully endeavoring to penetrate the gloom below, the rope slipped from his grasp and he fell upon the margin of the river, and remained for a moment senseless. It was but momentary, however. The instinctive sense that his tormentor was descending the rope with great rapidity, aroused him. Believing that he was now doomed to seizure, he arose, drew his dagger, resolving to sell his life dearly. But his pursuer, seemingly as ignorant as himself of the shortness of the rope, fell with a great force upon the merciless stones beside him. Unmindful of injury, however, he rose from the ground, and with a nimbleness unaccountable to Felix, disappeared along the shore.

He was greatly perplexed by these strange occurrences. A man silently approached, and extended a friendly hand to assist him from his fallen state, at the same time giving energy to the bruised limbs of Felix, by whispering :

“Cap’n got Job’s rope.”

It was the voice of the faithful Witless. Felix was deeply affected. He seized Job’s outstretched hand and pressed his skeleton fingers in gratitude to his heart.

“How can I repay these services,” exclaimed Felix. “Twice has your devotion conquered the obscurity of your intellect and given you strength of thought when I needed succor. What a noble heart this vail of idiocy deforms ! Poor Job, friend, companion and deliverer, to whom I am already so indebted ; you have plunged yourself into a danger that jeopardizes your life. My escape is detected. An agile enemy followed me down that giddy path, and has hastened to alarm the guard. Let them not find you here—hasten away, poor lad, and your share in this attempt will remain unknown.”

Job Witless did not move. He retained his hand upon the heart of Felix as if to soothe its agitation, and thus endeavored to comprehend the words addressed to him. He soon understood sufficient to reply :

“That only Bab come down the rope—him frightened.”

“Do you know him, Job ?” said Felix, gently urging him from the spot. “Will he not betray me to the guard ?”

“Guard laugh at Bab,” replied Job, with a seemingly amused expression—“Him can’t speak—him only chatter.”

“What!” exclaimed Felix, “is the fellow dumb?”

“Him monkey,” replied Job, astonished at his being denominated “a fellow.”

The mystery was explained. The speechless torturer was but a baboon. He had been confined in the cell below that of Felix to defend the soldiery against his various pranks, and after having used every effort to snake Felix from the rope, in which he at last succeeded, he availed himself of the path to effect his own escape. He was not, however, prepared for so serious a fall, and ran straight to the guard, uttering his complaints in discordant cries, which only excited their merriment and laughter. Felix, at this disclosure, could not repress a smile, despite the imminence of his danger, at the successful artifice of this adept in works of mischief; but Job grasped his arm and hurried him toward a boat which was floating at a short distance. They soon heard the noise of oars, as if some one was in pursuit. Felix looked at Job, who signed for him to enter the boat, where both were soon concealed, snugly stretched upon the bottom. The sound of oars drew nearer, and it was evident to Felix that something was attracting them toward their place of refuge. Presently a voice exclaimed:

“What boat is that? Pull ashore and overhaul her, and let her be taken alongside the *Asia*. In the morning we’ll inquire who leaves boats thus carelessly about.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” replied one of the mariners, and as the boat grounded, a man was heard to leap upon the shore:

Felix heard the sailor approach their hiding-place, and detection seemed certain, for the idiot, either not comprehending the fullness of their danger, or being unable to control his restless habits, fidgeted about; but, just as the man had placed his hand upon the gunwale of the boat, in order to leap in, the same stentorian voice which had before spoken, vociferated:

“Ashore there, Jim Staysail, leave the boat, and run along to the prison where we heard the noise. I hear it again. Pull along shore, boys to the same place, and let us hear what he makes of it.”

“It’s that baboon of Colonel Bland’s,” said another voice. “It ought to be run up. Only the other day it signaled to me with some scattered flags to send a boat ashore, and when it arrived there was nothing to be seen but this gibbering imp sitting upon a stone cracking hickory nuts, with the flags that did the mischief by his side.”

Felix felt that a crisis had now arrived, that demanded the utmost prudence and energy. He mistrusted the ability of his companion to act with sufficient circumspection. He arose as the noise of oars receded. At the same instant Job unmoored the boat and pushed it into the river, and as it glided gently with the tide, he whispered in to the ear of Felix:

“Sailors will find Cap’n’s ladder, now,” intimating at once that

he comprehended all that had been passing—and also their own peril.

While the earlier portions of these exciting scenes were passing, Will Waters, whose fidelity Felix had suspected, was true to his pledge. He repaired to the place of rendezvous at the hour assigned, where, after sitting some time, he became uneasy, alighted from his carriage, looked down and up the many crossing streets, but Felix was nowhere to be seen. At length Will gave the reluctant word to start, still traveling slowly and looking behind him hopefully, until his beast, whose supper was some miles in the van, so slyly increased his pace that poor Willie had scarcely relinquished the hope of being overtaken when he reached his homestead and his un milked cows.

Si Brambles was there to receive him. He could not rest in the camp while Felix was on this adventure, and he had been some hours at Will Waters' house awaiting his return.

"Where's the Cap'n?" exclaimed the sturdy Si, when Will drove up alone.

Will shook his head; but Si was a man of words and not of signs. He repeated the question in a louder key, which is supposed, by men of passion, to give force to language. Will became angry. His horse was impatient, and was making continual efforts to reach his manger despite the frightful reproaches of his master.

"What's a man to do," asked Will, "if he don't know?"

"Why, he's to say so," thundered Si.

"Well then," responded Will, "I say so—I *don't know!*"

This was not calculated to appease the irritable Si, who began to fear that he had delivered Felix into unworthy hands.

"Will Waters," he said, "I guess you know sum'at—tell me that. What makes you so mighty mum? Is't shame? Ha' ye sold the Cap'n as well as yer washy milk? If so, the Britisher's gold 'll do you no good. I'll hang ye, man. I'll hang ye with my own hands. Take a last look o' the only things that care for ye—yer hoss and cows—for the sun shall never shine agin upon yer livin' carcass."

Poor Will Waters was transfixed. He was losing more time in wonder, while his steed, which had fled from his hand, forced himself within the stable-door, and now stood using with energy the force of his iron clad heels against the vehicle in order to effect that separation which would restore him to his well-filled manger.

"Si Brambles," exclaimed Will, at length, "are you mad? What d'ye mean by 'washy milk'—'carcass'—'hangin'? By 'hoss,' 'cows?'" As he alluded to the nobler animal, he turned to the stable as if to give pathos to his language, and at that instant the gallant gray gave the last crushing blow which delivered him from the bondage of the cart. "I'm not frightened at your threats; but I guess I don't deserve 'em. I took the Cap'n safe and he 'pinted to meet me and did'nt. I waited four hours and I'm four hours late. I can't tell what kept 'im. Ain't this enough? What more d'ye wan't, Si Brambles?"

Si had been well employed in reflection and observation. He saw that Will, his old and well-tried friend, was hurt at his manner and his language. The explanation was clear, and he did not doubt its truth; he wished it had come a little earlier. He therefore promptly atoned for his resentment.

"Forgive me, Will," he said, extending his ample hand. "I take back all them words that well might have choked ye, and wish they had not bin said, nor would ef you'd spoke as plain afore as ye have done just now."

"That's honest, Si," said Will. "I guess that's spoke more like yoursel', and I'm satisfied. But as sure as I'm Will Waters, and no vender of washy milk, I'd ha' felled you with this ax ef ye'd not bin a Lexington hero."

Si—a giant in frame compared with the puny Waters—smiled at the circumstance to which he attributed his own forbearance, and then commenced a more particular inquiry in reference to Felix. But Will had little to add. Si, however, was alarmed, and resolved to pursue his journey to Boston, or as near as he dared venture, in the hope of learning something of his Captain. Will heard his determination, but pointing to his cows, his horse, the broken vehicle, and the time, regretted that he could not share his danger, and thus the friends separated.

Si Brambles, sturdy as the trees around his homestead, notwithstanding the great fatigue that he had undergone, boldly marched toward Boston. He reached the margin of the Charles river. On its bosom was reposing the *Asia*, ship-of-war, belonging to the British, and beyond was the city slumbering in silence. This apparent tranquility reassured his troubled mind, and he trudged along the shore toward the Neck. Suddenly, the calmness was broken by the sound of boisterous voices wafted upon the surface of the river from the direction of the guard-house—a spot well known to him. Then lights appeared at many of the prison windows—louder cries succeeded—a gun was fired and replied to by the *Asia*—and then the splash of oars from several directions convinced Si Brambles that there had been an escape, and that a vigorous pursuit was now commencing. The thought of his Captain was uppermost in his heart—it might be he who was thus hunted! Seeing a small skiff, he leaped into it, cut away its moorings with his sword, and, grasping the oars, pulled out into the stream, where he hoped to divert some of the many enemies from their hapless victim, be he friend or foe. A quick instinct told him it was some patriot who had escaped.

Felix and Job had floated silently with the tide until they were opposite the prison. It was too dark to see, but they heard what convinced them that the discovery was made. Jim Staysail saw the rope, and aroused the guard. Notice of the escape was soon communicated to the vessels in the harbor. In an instant, the river seemed alive with boats, when the fugitives, taking to their oars, pulled with all their might for a haven and for their lives. But there was only one boat of all that entered in the chase that followed in their track.

It was filled by remorseless men—a six-oared galley—and as they bent to their work it flew across the waters. Whether Felix propelled his boat to larboard, to starboard, or straight ahead, that almost phantom galley was ever dead astern. It gained at every stroke, and, like a bloodhound following his prey, was unerring in its path. So close had this fleet enemy approached, that Felix was about to yield himself in despair, when a tiny skiff, propelled by a single hand, shot alongside his boat. Felix relaxed in his labors and seized his dagger at the instant the daring stranger leaped from the skiff into his boat. As he was about to strike down the intruder, Job restrained his arm and whispered in his ear :

“ Si Brambles ! ”

It was indeed that watchful and faithful follower. He saw the danger of his friends—that they must be captured unless delivered by the success of some bold artifice. He therefore used his superior dexterity as a waterman for their rescue. He signaled for Job and Felix to lie upon their oars, then hauling his own skiff in the course of the pursuers, he ordered them again to give way. Almost the next instant there was a crash—the galley in her blind velocity had run down the skiff. A cry arose—a shout from the whole crew.

“ Back water,” exclaimed the boatswain, “ and keep a sharp lookout there—we have run down the prisoner’s boat. Save them from drowning, lads, that they may not escape the rope.”

The deception was completely successful, and the conception was as masterly as the execution was adroit. The stratagem excited the admiration of Felix and the laughter of poor Job, for, while the English mariners were at their work of equivocal mercy—preserving men from drowning that they might be hanged—the fugitives had landed, and uttering a derisive cheer which was well understood by their discomfited pursuers, they hastened beyond reach of pursuit, and, ere long, gave the countersign at the camp at Cambridge.

The escape of a rebel officer from the guard-house was the subject of strict inquiry the following morning. None of the soldiers were thought to be implicated; but it being reported by Jim Staysail that he found Bab, the monkey, running up and down the rope, and his many delinquencies having been recapitulated before the board, it was agreed that either in pursuit of instinctive mischief, or from the instruction of some one outside the walls, the monkey had conveyed the rope to the prisoner’s window. Colonel Bland was so plainly instructed to prevent any repetition of such insubordination as had been alleged against this animal, that he reluctantly ordered him for execution.

Job returned to Boston, bearing with him letters from Felix to Agnes, recounting the perils that had succeeded to Emily’s enchantment, and describing how much he owed to the manly and persevering efforts of the poor idiot. The kindness and sympathy of Agnes and Emily toward him increased, and he became their constant visitor. He was ever welcomed, and thus became less a rambler, and scarcely took those long excursions for which he once was

famous. His mother, too, flourished under the patronage of the ladies, and a smile of contentment was visible on her face, despite the abiding sorrow that nestled in her heart.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

Boston was alive with British soldiery, and the harbor was sprinkled with her war-ships. The fife, the drum, and the clarion were ever sounding and the air was filled with military noises night and day. Troops, armed for the conflict, marched to and fro in the narrow streets, upon whom some of the inhabitants looked exultingly, while others were stern and meely, showing what rival feelings reigned in neighboring hearts. The camp at Cambridge inspired this animation, for it was rumored that it was the intention of the British to march upon the rebels whom they affected to despise, and that their first movement would be to occupy Charlestown.

The patriots were not idle, nor were they friendless in the city. Governor Gage had sealed the barriers pretty securely, but not so hermetically but that intelligence traveled from garrison to camp. Resolute scouts, in their armor, crept through narrow crevices into their very enemies' heart, and there heard the merry gibes from the classic mouths of the Britons as well as their more serious intentions. Thus they learned of the determination to possess Charlestown.

This the Americans resolved to dispute. They would not permit the enemy to extend his line of operations without a struggle; therefore, on the night of the 16th of June, a force of one thousand five hundred men, not fully armed, but sparingly supplied with powder, and with only such rations in their wallets as were at hand, were marched from camp to the peninsula of Charlestown. They were unused to field service—unskilled in discipline; but dauntless and devoted to their cause. It was intended to fortify Bunker's Hill; but, there the works were merely rudimental; the engineers preferring Breed's Hill, which, though a less lofty height, was nearer Boston and the Charles river, and liable to be occupied by the enemy. Here the work of intrenchment commenced, and here the art of the engineers was well seconded by the labors of the sturdy men. They worked incessantly throughout the night—fatigue was forgotten in the ardor for the cause. In the morning, when they viewed the aggregate of that great night of toil, each man was as much astonished as the enemy—they had buried themselves in safety.

That night—the eve of a dreadful slaughter—did not pass without amusement. The English guarded their city jealously, and a chain

of sentinels were posted along the Charles river on the Boston side. These lonely wardens, accustomed to security, cried with loud voices, at frequent intervals, the ordinary assurance of safety, "All's well." This was as often heard by the army of workmen who so vigorously plied the pick and shovel on Breed's Hill, occasioned much merry badinage, and gave them the continued and cheering pledge that their stealthy doings were unseen and unsuspected.

The rosy tints of morning were apparent in the east, when the idle sentinels, casting their drowsy eyes toward Charlestown as a place to which they were ordered to remove that day, started with terror. They thought that they had beheld some marvelous convulsion—an upheaving of the earth or great organic change; but, upon a longer inspection, the disorganization so manifest on Breed's Hill was discovered to be the work of man instead of nature—indeed, that it was a night's achievement of the American army.

The alarm was given. Governor Gage and Generals Howe and Clinton were soon upon the banks gazing in surprise upon the magic doings of a night.

"Gentlemen," at length said Governor Gage, "what think you of these husbandmen? They are formidable with the spade."

"And equally so in design," replied Howe, "as you may see if you study those works as I have done."

"A mere ant-hill to our troops!" exclaimed Gage, derisively.

"Let us not permit those diggers to throw dust into our eyes!" said Howe sarcastically to Governor Gage, "for if these works are defended as well as they are planned and executed it will cost some hundreds of our gallant men to take them."

"But must be carried," said General Clinton.

"At any and every hazard," replied General Howe. "They must not be allowed to nestle there."

"Well, gentle mn," said Governor Gage, "let us to breakfast and then to arms!" and his suggestion was willingly adopted.

The Americans ate their rations in the trenches, while the drums of the British aroused all Boston and summoned the soldiers to the ranks, and soon applied themselves to strengthen their position.

At length the British army was assembled, and, being unopposed, was safely transported across the river to Charlestown. It was two in the afternoon before they were ready to advance. It was a gallant force of about four thousand men, commanded by General Howe. The day was intensely hot, and the fiery rays of the sun, descending upon the polished muskets of the soldiers, reflected a dazzling light upon which it was troublesome to gaze. At the word of command, the men moved toward Breed's Hill, at the summit of which, hidden in their intrenchments, an unseen enemy awaited them.

Boston was not impassive in all this dread preparation. Urged by various feelings, her citizens had migrated to the house tops, whence they could view the battle-field. Here mothers came to bless their sons as they drew their swords; wives, trembling with hope and fear, were imploring, from above, protection for their husbands; children,

nestling round their maternal parents, vainly extended their little hands and cried "Father! father!" knowing it was he for whom their dear mothers wept; while sisters, awed by this depth of sorrow, strove to conceal the agonies they felt for their devoted brothers.

The men were differently inspired. Lamentation had not weakened their hearts. They thought of principle, honor, *liberty*, and spurned danger in their maintenance. The Tory frowned on those less loyal than himself, as he pointed exultingly to the serried ranks of the British as they marched to the attack, while the patriot tauntingly responded that he might be less boastful of them as they returned. The bitterest acrimony existed between these parties, and had not the houses been insulated by the aerial division of streets and alleys, there might have been a battle on the roofs as well as upon the plain.

There were only three occupants of the roof of Mr. Falkland's residence—himself, Agnes and Emily. Mr. Falkland had been there some time, with a field glass in hand, viewing all the proceedings. The regiment of Colonel Bland formed part of the British force, and he felt greatly interested in watching the movements of that really soldierly commander. Agnes was terrified at the attacking army. As she beheld the glitter of its arms, the martial appearance of its men, and their obedience to their officers, she thought it invincible. In vain she looked for Felix. She had not seen him since the night of his distressing capture; nor heard from him but by that one letter brought by the idiot Job, who had been interdicted from again leaving the city by Colonel Bland. She, however, knew his gallant heart, believed him to be with the Americans behind the earth-works, and trembled for his fate before those advancing men in scarlet. Emily, too, seemed troubled, and scanned the field with an anxious and restless eye, as if she, like Agnes, sought something that was not visible; and while both were still pursuing their inquiries, Mr. Falkland called them to his side.

"Come closer to me, dear girls," he said; "a moment of great horror is approaching, when you may need my aid." Then calling their attention to the British forces, he continued; "Behold the gallant Howe coolly leading his warriors to the charge, and how merri-ly the veterans follow! They seem more like men assembled for a joust or harmless combat, and that the dames of our fair city had but rushed to their highest places to grace and admire the pageantry. See, Agnes, what figure is that above the redoubt that salutes us at this distance? Surely it must be—"

"Felix Temple," exclaimed Agnes, as with one hand she grasped the arm of Emily, and with the other retained her glass yet closer to her eye.

It was the gallant Felix. He had discerned Agnes, and ventured to appear for a moment above the works. He kissed his hand to Agnes, placed it upon his heart, and pointed upward toward Heaven. Then pressing to his lips his naked sword, he presented it to the enemy, and disappeared.

This was perceived by one of the officers of the British army, who, although half-way up Breed's Hill, and almost on the threshold of destruction, was induced by some strong feeling to turn his face toward Boston to distinguish the half-suspected object of this gesticulation. Agnes, through her powerful glass, saw that dark, revengeful brow, and that eye of malignant fire.

"Oh Emily," she exclaimed, as she fell into her cousin's arms, "it is Colonel Bland."

While Emily pressed her to her heart, and was about to whisper comfort in her ear, a volley of musketry thundered through the air, and in an instant a scream of terror came from the burdened roofs. The conflict had begun, though the horrors of the battle scene were mercifully curtained by the smoke.

In the trenches all was confidence. The Americans viewed the British forces undismayed. They ate their dinner while awaiting the assault, and then their officers entreated them not to fire until the word was given, as victory would depend as much on their prudence and obedience as on their valor.

As the British attained the base of the hill—which was about ninety feet in height and of a gentle slope—there was a deadly silence in the trenches. Felix's company—composed chiefly of the men of Lexington—stood as firm as a Grecian phalanx of antiquity, but so attuned to discipline that they disdained even to gratify their impatient vengeance until the word should be given. Si Brambles, proud of his men, yet vainer of his Captain, smiled as he heard the tread of the advancing host.

Nearer and nearer the British came to their foemen's lair—not an enemy was seen or a whisper heard as they approached that wide, gaping, ominous grave, to which they marched without a soldier's dirge. Soon their caps rose above the horizon of the redoubt—then their eyes became visible—these were the targets for the musketry in the intrenchments.

General Prescott, who commanded the Americans, waving his sword above his head, cried :

"Fire!"

Before the echo of his voice had died, the fatal answer was heard from a thousand muskets, and the ground was strewn with dead and dying English. Quickly the volleys were repeated, until the assailants, broken, dispersed and beaten, refused to be rallied by the gallant Howe, but retreated in confusion to the water's edge.

The cheers of the victorious Americans succeeded the destruction by their fire, and they indulged in unbounded congratulations; but it was soon perceived that the British were re-forming, and the Americans joyfully prepared to resist another assault. As Howe advanced to this second attack, some shells, thrown by the English across the river from Copp's Fort, set fire to the village of Charlestown. The conflagration extended to two hundred houses, and both armies became invisible beneath the smoke. Howe hastened up the hill, hoping to avail himself of this goodly mask to leap into the

trenches. Felix saw the possibility of such a ruse, and prepared his men for the event.

Until this period of the day the air had been heated and motionless; but, just as the British had reached the spot strewn with the lifeless bodies of the former fight, and hoped to succeed in their stratagem, a breeze blew gently toward the sea, dispersed the smoke, and revealed the stealthy presence of the British. But Felix had detected their rising forms in the thinning vapor, as they appeared like shadows rising from the earth, and gave the word to his brave men to fire, which was followed by volleys along the line, which so dismayed the enemy that, a second time defeated, they again rushed down the hill, leaving their General almost alone.

Evening was now approaching—it was nearly six—and it was thought that the British would not attempt more that night. Such delay occurred that the Americans sat down to refreshments, and to talk over the glory of the day; but soon it was perceived that the enemy was being reinforced, and the Americans again prepared for the third act of this sanguinary drama.

The town of Charlestown is separated from the main land by a neck, or isthmus. This was jealously guarded by the English with a ship-of-war and two vessels—one on either side—which swept it with their unceasing fire. Across this neck Felix was dispatched for reinforcements; but few men could be induced to submit to this fiery ordeal on their way to battle. While he stood imploring them to follow, and share in the third victory of their fellow soldiers, a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice exclaiming in his ear :

“Job fight; Job go with Cap’n.”

He turned and perceived poor faithful Witless. The idiot had heard of a coming battle, had escaped from Boston, and had hastened to the camp, where, learning that Felix was at Charlestown, he commenced his march thither, and reached the Neck just in time to offer his services to Felix.

“Job,” said Felix, in astonishment, “why are you here, my friend? You must not cross that frightful path; besides, I want you to take a message to the ladies.”

“No path frightful to Job,” replied the dauntless idiot, as he stood erect, with his musket by his side.

“I know that you are a fearless fellow, Job,” said Felix; “but I want to communicate with the ladies—to assure them that I am unharmcd. Will you refuse me this slight favor, Job?”

“Ladies on roofs and see all,” responded the imperturbable idiot. “Miss Emily on roof and like soldier and like glory; if Job win glory and be like soldier, then Miss Emily like Job.”

“Poor Job,” thought Felix, as he observed the glowing features of the idiot. “Emily, no doubt, will be proud of the devotion of such a knight. I, however, have a feeling in my heart toward him above that of gratitude to the preserver of my life. It seems innate; and whenever my duty will permit me to sheathe my sword, I will endeavor to cultivate and improve that intelligence which so frequent

ly surmounts his idiocy." Then, resuming his dialogue with Job, he said : " I can not deny you, Job; and you and I, at least, will return to the aid of our almost exhausted countrymen."

The enlistment of the idiot, Witless, and the taunt of Felix, had more effect than his persuasion. Many would not be cut-headed by the senseless Job, and prepared to run the gauntlet of the British fire, rather than submit to that humiliation. Felix boldly led, followed by Job, and then in single file, and at slight intervals, the others. The rebels saw the maneuver, increased their fire, and one-half the reinforcement was destroyed !

Felix was welcomed to the trenches by his men. Job caught Si Brambles by the hand, as he did most of the men, to whom he was well known. Felix found his gallant company full of fire, but short of ammunition. All the resources in powder, ball and men, that could be possibly spared from other parts of the peninsula, were sent to the trenches; and the soldiers, dauntless even in this necessity, had been assiduously collecting stones, so that they might not be wholly without missiles in case of need. Thus inadequately appointed to meet fresh reinforcements, they fearlessly awaited the attack.

As Felix observed the British forming below the hill, he exclaimed :

" Brave soldiers, sustain the honor you have won this day. Let the world see and history record how nobly America fights her early battles of independence. In the sight of thousands of the maids and matrons of your country you have achieved two victories; let them now behold you grace your brows with the laurels of a third."

General Howe now gave the word to advance, and again led the British forward. In his last charge he had heard from the incautious lips of the soldiers in the trenches, that there was a lack of powder, and he had also observed a portion of the intrenchment that was weaker than that from which he had been twice repulsed. These circumstances, mainly induced him to make his third attack that night, for he thought that both defects might be amended before morning.

The British were received with a volley so destructive as made them doubt the want of powder in the trenches, and numbers fell upon the bodies of those of their comrades who had been some hours standing in death; but Howe had craftily masked his chief purpose; and, while some of his men were thus engaged, he moved with a strong force to the point most open to attack. It was weak as he had observed, and here the English gained a footing and announced it by a cheer, while their half-armed antagonists were, for a moment, in dismay.

Felix saw this, led his bold fellows to the charge, and formed a wall, which, for a time, was impenetrable. Enraged at this stubbornness in so small a band, the redoubtable Major Pitcairn—whose wanton slaughter at Lexington still festered in the patriot's heart—advanced with his marines, calling upon them to drive the enemy before them. Job recognized the Major, remembered the contemptuous words that he had used when he shed the first blood at Lexing

ton, leveled his musket and shot him through the heart. The Major fell, with the words of defiance stifled in his throat.

"Forward, men, forward!" cried Felix, as the Major fell.

"Forward!" echoed Si Brambles. "Lexington is avenged by Lexington men."

The soldiers, impelled by these incentives, rushed upon the enemy. The marines fled—some passed over, but numbers fell upon the body of their commander, whose resting-place was distinguished by a hillock of the dead. But, reinforcements were quickly ordered up, and the Americans were, in turn, compelled to recede before the strength of overwhelming numbers. The trenches were now invaded from several points. Few of the Americans had powder, and many were not even armed with muskets. In this defenseless condition there was no alternative but to fly.

The retreat soon became general. The British, perceiving the field half won, exerted every effort against the indomitable band commanded by the dauntless Felix, who, inspiring them with his own unyielding spirit, kept them shoulder to shoulder, using the little powder they had still in reserve in spilling the blood of their furious enemies.

At this terrible crisis Si Brambles stepped beside his officer, and said:

"We have only a few rounds of cartridges left."

It was what Felix apprehended, but he quickly responded:

"But our men are in good heart, and firm. The Generals are endeavoring to rally men to sustain us. Let us hope, Si, and expend these few rounds to the best advantage."

Felix could say no more, for there was a vigorous movement in the ranks of the enemy, and he distinctly heard a voice thunder forth, as if he had just arrived:

"Shame, soldiers, shame! Why gaze upon a few men like those? What has so suddenly converted them into warriors, and you into cowards? I will now lead you; and if a man of them escape, it will be to the disgrace of our valiant corps. *Fire!*"

A volley was poured upon the devoted men, but the reproach of their officer had not improved his soldiers as marksmen, for their volley did but little mischief. It was, however, rapidly followed by a bayonet charge. It was then that Felix discovered that he whom he had heard thus deride his men was Colonel Bland. There was a savage smile upon his countenance as he advanced with his men, as if revenge was now within his grasp.

The eagle eye of Felix, however, continually scanned the field. He had seen the heroes of the trenches retreat when they had no more powder, and had boldly retarded the pursuit. He had witnessed the efforts of the Generals to rally the flying soldiers, and he had heard General Putnam use menace, supplication, and reproach, to induce the men to make another effort for the glory of the day. It was the object of Felix to fall back upon the very little band that these fearless leaders had gleaned from the stricken field. He would not,

therefore, endanger the safety of his men by allowing himself to be precipitated into a personal conflict, but attempted to withdraw gradually from the strong force opposed to him that he might contribute his gallant fellows to those few soldiers whom the Generals had collected. The Colonel doubtlessly divined his object, and made such a vigorous charge as required all the courage of his men to withstand. It might have been more fatal had not a fortunate incident occurred. Both officers were exerting every effort to sustain their forces, when these rivals met. Their swords were drawn—their blood was heated—and their furious natures gave way as they rushed upon each other. The conflict, however, was short. The anger of the Colonel blinded his prudence, and after a few passes he received a thrust in his side and fell. Si Brambles, availing himself of this victory, cried out that the British Colonel was slain, when his men gave way. Some attempted to remove him from the field.

“Touch me not,” he vociferated; “follow up the enemy. Seize that rebel Captain, and let not one of his company live to tell whether he is a prisoner or among the slain. Charge them to the teeth!”

A feeble charge was made in accordance with his savage order, but it was repulsed, and Felix and his gallant heroes were welcomed with three cheers by the forces around their Generals. With two battles won, still the day was lost; the soldiers, yet unconquered, were too few and too short for ammunition to redeem it. They therefore fell back deliberately to Bunker's Hill, crossed the neck, and halted on Prospect Hill, where they bivouacked for the night.

The British officers, infuriated at their ill-success, endeavored to prevail on General Howe to follow up his triumph and attack the Americans in their camp at Cambridge; but the General shook his head, cast his eyes upon the fatal redoubt, and replied that the victory had been already too costly. He felt that it was an earnest of the reception he should meet with if he followed the wolf to his lair.

The greatest praise was bestowed upon Felix, for the manner in which he had covered the retreat, preserving from annihilation hundreds of brave men whose means of defense had been expended. When he joined General Putnam, that fearless commander seizing him by the hand, complimented him upon the gallant manner in which he had used his last few rounds of powder. With these distinguished encomiums he endeavored to solace himself for the adversities of the day, and with the worthy and faithful Si, the still-infatuated Job—whom they had the utmost difficulty to convince of the prudence of retreat—and his brave followers, they retired to a soldier's bed upon the grassy earth. The horrors and exhaustion of the day were soon forgotten in their slumbers.

The sun shone cheerfully upon both enemies the following morning. The British still garrisoned Bunker's Hill, where they seemed content to rest upon their laurels. Felix aroused his men, and conducted them to their former quarters, when Job, restless and perverse,

prepared to return to Boston. In vain did Felix represent the danger of placing himself in the power of an excited soldiery so early after the slaughter of so many of their officers and friends. His resolution was unshaken. He could neither comprehend the peril nor the arguments. Poor Job, thinking he had fought beneath the eye of Emily, was now anxious to receive the guerdon of her smile. Felix reluctantly consented to his departure, instructing him to inform Agnes that he remained unhurt, for he would not increase the hazard of the idiot by allowing him to be the bearer of a letter. Job took his leave, and the next minute his lithe figure was seen bounding over the hills toward Boston with the blitheness of one who had little on his mind.

The site of this incipient battle of independence is still revered; but the charm of it is fled. That skillfully planned redoubt, where the early heroes of our freedom toiled all night, and, when the morning came, exchanged the mattock for the musket, and fought all day, is gone—faded—buried—deep as the British who fell upon the margin of that Herculean work. Those historic trenches have disappeared beneath the ardent patriotism of a generous people, who, desirous of planting her imposing record, filled over the giant creation of a few hours of darkness, overtopped it with a dainty crop of grass, and built in its center a lofty obelisk. England has still, in its pristine shape, its Cæsar's Camp; Ireland has its Cromwell's forts, both emblems of subjugation. Would it not have been better to have preserved the Charlestown trenches—that stepping-stone to our greatness—than to have interred them ever so sacredly?

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE WILDERNESS.

The bark of liberty was now fairly launched upon the ocean, subject to its storms and calms, its hopes and fears; but the stout vessel was manned by an indomitable crew, who would not be easily driven from their soundings. Since the battle of Bunker's Hill had been added to the victory of Lexington, the British confined themselves to their stronghold, and the armies remained in watchfulness within sound of each other's bugles.

Before the herald of the last combat had reached Philadelphia, Congress had appointed Washington to the command of the American army. He was on his way to join his compatriots when the glorious intelligence was related to him at New York. It was a pleasing episode in his installation to command, and he hastened forward that he might share in whatever other matters might be in prepara-

tion. On the 3d of July, 1775, he stood beneath the spreading branches of a venerable elm on Cambridge Common—which is still in life; and drawing his sword—a weapon which was not sheathed in peace until it was graced with victory, eight years later—formally took command of the army of America.

It was this great General's task to qualify the men for years of arduous service. He commenced by establishing a system of drill and discipline. He taught the men the value of obedience to their officers, and the officers that they should be the preceptors to the men, for their moral bearing was as formidable to the foe as their fearless hearts.

While these measures of improvement were progressing in a manner worthy of the chief, an expedition was devised to co-operate with the force of Montgomery already in Canada. The object was the conquest of Quebec. The command was conferred on Benedict Arnold—then a Colonel—and eleven hundred men were detached for the service, who were selected for their vigor, their hardy nature, and their discipline, and the company of Felix Temple was included in the number chosen for the expedition. He was proud of the distinction; Si Brambles was delighted; while the soldiers received the intelligence with cheers.

But, as the noisy joy of his companions resounded in the air, the eyes of Felix were directed toward the spires of Boston; he was soon unmindful of their clamor. The thought of Agnes occupied his mind. He had heard nothing from her since Job Witless, flushed with honor of his deeds, had quitted him on the evening of the battle. He now thought how impossible it would be to enter upon such a dangerous expedition as that to which he had been assigned without the armor of her blessing. But it was equally impossible to enter the city undetected. The British had redoubled their vigilance, and their severity had even prevented the wayward and dextrous Job from visiting Cambridge. Profoundly meditating, he had entered his tent, thrown himself upon some coats and cloaks, spread upon the ground, and had there remained in perplexity till midnight, when the folds of the tent were abruptly thrown aside, and a figure stood in the entrance.

“Who is here?” exclaimed Felix, in a voice of indifference.

“It is I, Cap'n; Si Brambles.”

“Come in, Si,” responded Felix. “A vision of you has been moving before my eyes for many hours.”

“I guess there's quare,” replied Si, “and I know nothin' of it. But I can't a vision now, Cap'n, afore ye; 'tis the by Si wid the order o' march.”

“What?” exclaimed the recumbent Felix, leaping from the ground and standing erect, “the route! When do we march?”

“At sunrise in the mornin’,” responded the astonished Lieutenant.

Felix almost forgot his ardor for his country in his lamentation for the other idol who claimed his worship. This sudden announcement that his departure was ordered to take place in a few short hours—

that he must so soon remove still further from Agnes than the distant spot on which he stood, where he already felt as an exile—seemed incomprehensible. He stared so madly in the eyes of the Lieutenant, that that officer shook his head as he prepared to quit the tent, exclaiming to himself:

“Ah, I guess I see it all. I guess I see through it! He was planning another scheme to get among the Britishers to see that young gal. Love’s an audacious thing. The march to Quebec is safer than stealing into these British lines.”

But, as the reflective Si was passing through the entrance of the tent, Felix, who had succeeded in mastering his emotion, said:

“Let the men be assembled on parade in marching order, half an hour before the first ray of the sun can be seen in the east, that our readiness for action may be seen in our diligence.”

Si quitted the Captain’s quarters with a lighter step. The process of packing was soon ended. The men were mustered before the time. The farewell was soon spoken to all old comrades, and, with one last, lingering look on the city which held the better half of his being, Felix placed himself at the head of his men; with drums beating and colors flying he stepped heavily and reluctantly in the direction of his duty.

The expedition was to proceed through the State of Maine. It was landed at Fort Warren, opposite Augusta, on the Kennebec river, in August. Here commenced the solemn silences of an inhospitable wilderness; this unshrinking band was to proceed through it with no better chart than the copy of a journal undertaken by a traveler fifteen years earlier, to which was added some information obtained by a few St. Francis Indians in camp when the detachment left. With these scanty twinklings of light the gallant host launched their boats upon the waters of the Kennebec and approached the dark wilderness. Arnold divided his little force into four detachments, each quitting Augusta a day apart. When the last company had departed, accompanied by Felix and four chosen oarsmen he stepped into a canoe, and joined the advanced party.

The bateau glided pleasantly up the Kennebec, which was lined with trees one hundred feet in height, clad in their beautiful autumnal foliage. The men, happy and merry, sung their many songs as they pulled their crafts against the tide of the sluggish stream. It was thus they expressed the thoughts of duty and glory. The first interruption to this cheerfulness was at Norridgewock Falls, where ensued a portage of upwards of a mile. The bateaux, which had floated the men for thirty miles, now had to be carried in their turn. The banks of the river were rugged and precipitous, but up these cliffs both boats and provender had to be conveyed, and borne along the rocky paths to navigable waters. In this transshipment it was discovered that many of the boats were leaky, and that much of their provisions had been injured and destroyed. However, encouraged by their officers, the men repaired the injuries; but to surmount the difficulties caused seven days’ detention.

Deeper and deeper the intrepid Arnold led his soldiers into the wilderness, who, obstructed in their progress by continually recurring falls and rapids, now depended on their officers for that cheer and encouragement which good-humor had afforded them at the commencement of their journey. Nor did the brave followers of Felix look to him in vain. By day he toiled with them in all their perilous duties; at meals he shared the hardness of their fare; in the evening, before they betook themselves to the comfortless pillows, he related to them exciting tales of ancient history, emulative anecdotes of Roman soldiery, until the wearied men, delighted with his narratives, found their hard couches softened and their feelings buoyant and hopeful for the exigencies of the morrow.

There was one man in the company who seemed grateful beyond measure for these amusing and elating sketches. He endeavored to express his thankfulness by every effort to assist his Captain. However weary the labors of the day, Darkman—for that was his name—leaped up with the agility of the deer to obtain whatever he required. When Felix essayed to share in the hardships of the day, Darkman was soon by his side that he might bear the greater portion of the burden. Such attentions could not escape the observation of one so shrewd as Felix, and he attempted on several occasions to express his sense of this attention; but Darkman shrunk from their utterance. Astonished at this singular conduct, Felix spoke to Si Brambles on the subject. The astute soldier characterized Darkman as a mysterious person. No one knew him—nor whence he came. He never uttered a word of complaint or of satisfaction. The syllables “yes” and “no” comprised the whole of his vocabulary. But he was zealous and indefatigable in his duty; was always willing to assist his comrades when they were prepared to accept his favors as silently as he rendered them. Still, the men regarded him with more awe than respect, although there was really nothing to induce this feeling but an eccentricity of conduct which amounted to little else than a desire to be silent, alone.

While Si Brambles was delivering himself of some of these strictures upon Darkman, he seemed somewhat nervously impressed. From time to time he directed his attention toward the branches of the trees and the dark recesses in the mountains as if fearing to be heard beyond the Captain, when Felix, looking in the direction of Si’s suddenly pointed finger, discerned, emerging from the mouth of a cavern in the hill, the very Darkman who was the subject of their converse. His eyes were cast down, while he walked a slow and measured pace. Si, greatly disconcerted, said, in a subdued voice, to Felix:

“Twice have I spoke of that man, and both times has he appeared as if to warn me agin the mention of his name. Cap’n, he’s a man, or sum’at else, not to be crossed, although he’s in the ranks.”

At these words he hastily quitted Felix. The Captain could but express astonishment at the impression this singular man made upon

his rough troops and their Lieutenant; but the terrors of the path they were pursuing drove from his mind these lighter matters, and he was soon again absorbed in the rigor of his duty.

That night they reached a lofty mountain—snow-capped, but nameless in the journal of their guidance—at the base of which they encamped and awaited the advance of the other detachments, when it was disclosed that the rear-guard—by a wilful or an accidental misconstruction of orders—had abandoned the enterprise and retraced their steps to Cambridge! By this insubordination, Arnold was deprived of one fourth of his force. While he was lamenting this event, heavy rains ensued, and the water from the neighboring mountains poured down in such torrents that the soldiers' camp was flooded, some of their boats destroyed, and themselves preserved only with the utmost difficulty. Then snow and ice and cold ensued, followed by hunger and despondency. The labor, the danger, the sufferings were intense. Waterfalls and turbulent rapids were continually recurring; the haggard soldiery were as often the bearers of the bateaux as they were borne by them. At length they reached Lake Megantic, the source of the Chaudiere. Here the gallant Arnold encamped his ragged band, and, after endeavoring to soothe their despair, to revive their hopes, he, accompanied by Felix, and a few chosen men, of whom Darkman was one, went down the rapids of the Chaudiere in bateaux in search of food for his starving legion. They had no guide to tell them of the peril of venturing upon those remorseless waters. The bottom of the river was rocky; the foaming surge, which roared around their boats, seemed impatient to prey upon the presumptuous men who had thus intruded upon their bosom. Still the adventurers were bold. A thousand lives depended upon their skill; and as these heroic sufferers collected on the banks to speak a last farewell to the messengers of life, and saw the troubled waters white with rage and appalling in their roar, and realized that their redemption depended on those puny skiffs, their hopes sunk to despondency. Suddenly, as the bateaux still staggered in the distance, over the growling waves, a noble figure arose in the foremost boat, and waving a cheer of encouragement with his hand, hope was again restored. A thousand voices, in one mighty sound, ascended in thankfulness to the Heavens for what these famishing travelers construed into an assurance of coming manna.

Meanwhile the bateaux glided on, braving the turbulence of the foaming rapids, until the roar of falling waters came upon the ears of those in the advanced boats, and the mad current increased its rage and force. The men recognized the fearful warning and knew that a cataract was before them, and leaped from the bateaux into the turbulent waters; one person alone remained with the doomed boats. He stood upon the stern of the hindermost. He did not speak, for his voice would not have been heard; but, by his gesticulations, he made known to those in the rear the danger which they approached, at the same time pointing to the only chance of safety in this desperate strait, the mouth of a small tributary where the water

was comparatively passive. Signals were soon made that he was seen and understood, and they made for the refuge and were saved; but the bateaux containing this valiant soldier neared the fatal leap. His companions of the abandoned boats were already safe on shore and were shrieking to him to seek safety, and when he saw that he could render no further service, he quitted the boat, which was the next instant dashed to atoms down the precipice. Not so the fearless man who had piloted his companions from impending death. He passed from rock to rock, clinging to the scruy projections with a tenacity that baffled the remorseless fury of the current, and thus he reached the shore. Arnold, Felix, and the others received him with their congratulations and their thanks as he emerged from the freezing waters, and then they first discovered that they were indebted for their preservation to the mysterious Darkman. He listened to their encomiums with profound silence, and when Felix endeavored to grasp his hand, Darkman rushed from the spot toward the bateaux, which the men attributed a desire to change his clothing; but which the observing Felix perceived was an intentional and singular avoidance, for this unknown man had permitted no similar freedoms with each other of the party.

However, the danger passed—the exploit over—the peril of the starving hundreds whose lives depended on their promptness occupied their minds, and in a few minutes after the landing of the courageous Darkman the men were conveying the bateaux round the falls; and launching them upon little less passionate waters, they proceeded on their voyage, and happily reached Sertigin, a French settlement, where there was food in abundance. Here not an hour was lost in purchasing cattle and provisions, and dispatching them to their almost prostrate comrades, who were daily straining their eyes in looking for the promised succor, and who, when it at length arrived, were occupied in cooking their moccasins and cartouche boxes and every other article of leather, in the hope thus to satisfy their craving appetites.

Food warmed their hearts and gave them vigor, and thus refreshed, they gayly encountered the dangers in reserve, and soon reached the valley of the Chaudiere, where they were received hospitably by the native Indians, a company of whom enrolled themselves beneath their banner, and on the 9th of November, 1775, they arrived at Point Levi, opposite Quebec. They had been two months in the prosecution of this painful march, more than half of which was spent in threading an untrodden wilderness, where the soldiers had to carry the bateaux and provisions round seventeen waterfalls, cross deep ravines, and toil up lofty precipices, with the accessory hardships of rain, snow and hunger; still the brave fellows seemed well repaid for all their suffering when they debouched from the wood and saw before them the city they had sought.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ASSAULT ON QUEBEC.

It was morning when the forces of Arnold arrived in sight of the chosen foe. The mists of night still hung upon the atmosphere, for although the sun had risen it had not then radiated sufficient power to disperse this stubborn rival. Through this gauzy mist were seen the gray and massive old French walls of the city which had yielded to the English without a breach, because summoned to surrender from the heights of Abraham. The soldiers gazed upon its fearful strength; but were undismayed, for they knew that it had been once humbled in defeat, and believed that what man had achieved man could again accomplish.

The French *habitans*, and not the sentinels, were the first to give the alarm, and cried that an enemy was near the gates "*venu en toile*." The English garrison, construing the word "*toile*," sheet-iron, rushed in alarm to the battlements to view their iron-clad warriors, when they perceived, no doubt, to their great relief, that the soldiers wore over-shirts of linen.

In the mean time, while the increasing warmth of the sun gradually disclosed the features of the fortress, Felix stood enchanted with the grandeur of the *coup d'œil*. The duties of the soldier were forgotten in the admiration of the artist, and he was astonished to be awakened from his profound reverie by a familiar tap on the shoulder.

"Ah, Temple, my brave comrade," said Colonel Arnold, joyously, for it was he, "are you taking parallels for the placement of our artillery that you study the walls of yon grim city so deeply?"

"No, Colonel," replied Felix, with a sudden start at the abruptness of the interruption, "indeed I was not so occupied. I had forgotten my mission of destruction in my rapture at the majesty of the surrounding scenery; but in reference to your humorous remarks on siege artillery, I think it will be a somewhat arduous undertaking to batter down those colossal walls with musket-balls. It would be a far shorter business if the Governor could be tempted to meet us on the plain."

"Carleton's blood flows too slowly to expect any such chivalrous generosity," replied Arnold, with a sneer. "He thinks himself in security—may it lull suspicion. Like Achilles the ancient, this city

has a vulnerable point. Our artillery is within the walls if our appearance will but induce the *habitans* to light the matches."

Felix was at no loss to comprehend these significant allusions, for he knew that the French hated their English conquerors, and was rejoiced when the order was given to cross the St. Lawrence under the cover of night and to rendezvous at Wolfe's Cave. This was effected, and, led by the fearless Arnold the intrepid soldiers ascended thence to the plains of Abraham, the last battle-field of the rival heroes Montcalm and Wolfe, where, sixteen years before, both heroes had fallen, the one in the arms of victory, the other, scarcely less honored, in defeat.

This position so easily gained, in the morning Arnold approached the walls, and his flag of truce having been rejected, he made heralds of Chaudiere Valley Indians and issued a proclamation to the citizens by means of their arrows, hoping to arouse the resistance of the French. He then advanced his little force within eight hundred yards of the city; but the English would not move from the security of their walls; the citizens were awed by the military, and made no demonstration, and he was compelled to retire. As they passed toward their place of rendezvous, about three miles distant, Felix remarked to Arnold:

"It would be better for us, Colonel, if we had our siege guns outside."

"Yes," replied Arnold, with more bitterness than on the previous day, "I see how useless is artillery when the enemy holds the matches."

Arnold was soon joined by the brave Montgomery, who, having taken Montreal, came to assist in the attack upon Quebec. An assault was determined upon, and the night having arrived, the forces were divided into two bodies, one to be led by Montgomery, and the other by Arnold, which were to assail opposite barriers and meet in the city. The night was dark, cold and windy, with the additional disadvantage of a heavy fall of snow. Despite this frown of the elements, however, the detachments proceeded to their appointed stations. Arnold led the forlorn hope, and he was rejoiced when Felix begged to be permitted to serve with him, and both were highly pleased that among the first of the men who stepped forward as candidates for this separate service was the unflinching Darkman. They had seen his coolness in peril and his fertility in resource when almost in the jaws of death, and they accepted his services with the greatest satisfaction. The forlorn hope consisted of twenty-five men, led by Arnold and Felix, and it was observed that Darkman placed himself immediately behind the latter. With the wind driving the falling snow directly in their faces, these gallant men advanced. The path was narrow, and the shower of grape-shot seemed to rival in its drift the blinding snow, when Colonel Arnold fell. He was so wounded in the knee that he could not stand. He caught Felix by the hand.

"Temple," he said, "I cannot instruct you in your duty; but my wound must not detain you--forward."

The Colonel was borne to the rear, and Felix, followed by his fierce confederates, attacked the barrier, and before either the scaling-ladders or the piece of ordnance could arrive, a cheer announced that the barrier was carried. At this moment Morgan came up to take command. He responded to the cheer of victory, and despite the firing now commenced at another gate, he caught Felix by the hand, exclaiming :

“Temple, you have the valor of the lion. I saw your position when poor Arnold fell, and ordered forward the ladders, when I found that the gun with which I was to have aided you was impeded by the snow; but your skill and intrepidity dispensed with both. Let us, however, hasten on and push these fellows, while they seem disposed to yield.”

Without another word, Morgan and Felix hastened toward the next barrier, followed by their men, who partook the ardor of their leaders. The bleak wind still drove the falling snow into their faces, and the enemy increased the annoyance by their fearful showers of grape-shot; but the unflinching soldiers, mad for martial honor, dashed forward and reached the barrier. The ladders were ordered forward, and when placed, Morgan and Felix led the desperate ascent. They were gallantly supported, and for some moments the fight was terrible; then the enemy gave way, the gates were forced, and the second barrier was passed. Another cheer announced to their companions in the rear a second victory.

“Come on, brave fellows,” exclaimed Felix, “there is now but one gate between us and the city. Another such a triumph as the two you have won, and we shall meet the brave Montgomery and the place will be ours.”

With cheers the men moved toward the last barrier. They reached it, and now a fierce struggle ensued; but the enemy had become awakened, and the commander had dispatched a force to a side-gate, which took these gallant victors in the rear, and so galled them with grape and canister that they were compelled to take refuge in some houses on the side. Here they defended themselves bravely, but being assailed by powerful forces on both sides, their position became desperate, and their places of refuge scarcely tenable. Even the fierce Morgan thought reluctantly of surrender; but Felix, shrinking before the vision of a long captivity, so distressing to his brighter hopes in love, resolved to attempt an escape. Morgan endeavored to dissuade him from so mad a scheme, representing the penalty as almost certain death; but another prompter in the heart of Felix made him deaf to these kindly exhortations, and while Morgan prepared for a surrender, Felix determined on a retreat. The only path was that which had been one of victory to their arms. This was narrow, and occupied by the troops of the enemy, who were fast closing upon Morgan. The fall of snow, however, was unabated, and it had so incrustated the British soldiers, that all distinction in regimental costume was obliterated. He therefore crept down the path, till, hiding himself in a projecting doorway, he there awaited

the approaching enemy. When a few had passed, he unobservedly joined in the throng, and thus far succeeding, he gradually fell back to the rear, and began to congratulate himself upon the success of his device, when, just as he seemed to have attracted the attention of an officer of the rear-guard, the complete shield of snow, which had to that moment masked his uniform, fell from his breast, and revealed to the astonished commander the continental military dress. Even now the cautious Briton, indisposed to act rashly, demanded, in a loud voice :

“The word, sir?”

But as he perceived some hesitation in reply, he was about to plunge his sword, which was naked in his hand, into the body of Felix, when a clash was heard, and with a single groan the Briton fell, and as he did so, a figure pushed Felix onward, and a voice he could not recognize, said :

“Run, run, the path is clear. This moment or you are lost. I will guard the rear.”

With this exclamation of some unknown friend, came a volley of musketry, and the sound of infantry in pursuit.

Felix did not reject the warning advice of his preserver, especially as he beheld him join in the retreat, and both hastened along the noiseless carpet of the snow which concealed from their agile followers all knowledge of their position in the race, though an occasional word uttered by the pursuing soldiers revealed to Felix and his companions that the interval between them was increasing. The British seemed to suspect this, for an officer's voice cried “Halt!” then “Fire!” and having apparently listened for some effect from their volley, and detecting no sound, they seem inclined to abandon the pursuit. The bullets plowed up the snow around the retreating Felix; but the only wound he received was a slight one on the arm. His companion, however, faltered in his pace.

“Are you injured?” inquired Felix. “Were you struck by that last volley?”

“Slightly,” replied the man; “but run, run on, I'll follow at a slower rate.”

“I will not abandon you,” replied Felix. “If life hangs upon such a felon act, I will not purchase it. Permit me to assist you.”

“Touch me not,” exclaimed the wounded man; “there is a wide chasm 'twixt you and I. Approach no nearer.”

Felix disregarded the caution, which he already ascribed to delirium, occasioned by the severity of the wound.

“You but this instant saved my life,” said Felix, “and you must not reject my administration in your hour of trial. Let me support you, for I perceive that you suffer from loss of blood.”

This effort brought the refugees face to face, and Felix exclaimed, with undisguised astonishment :

“What, Darkman! Is it you?”

“Ay,” replied the soldier, “it is; but you know no more of the wretched Darkman than his name.”

“Enough for me, my brave and worthy friend,” said Felix, with enthusiasm. “I now see your devotion. You followed me on in this perilous undertaking as my voluntary guardian, and when you saw the sword upraised for my destruction you averted its fall. I claim the right of reprisals. I must and will assist you, and let us not forget that we are still within the camp of the enemy.”

Darkman said no more, and Felix supported him toward their distant rendezvous. On their journey they encountered two or three others of the patriot band, who relieved Felix from his now onerous undertaking, for poor Darkman seemed fast sinking. When they reached their quarters, Felix summoned a surgeon, and committing his preserver to his professional care, hastened to report himself to Arnold. Felix found that he had retired to his couch with his shattered leg. He listened with great calmness to the recital of the calamities of the night, and then related to Felix that Montgomery had wholly failed, and that he and many others had perished in their first attack.

These disasters, however, did not abate the heroic feelings with which the heart of Arnold was at that period endowed. Suffering with the agony of his wound and from the humiliation of defeat, his stubborn valor was still unsubdued, and as his bright eyes shone with hope, he exclaimed to Felix:

“I have no thoughts of leaving this proud town until I enter it in triumph. I am in the way of my duty and I know no fear!”

Better for Benedict Arnold had he fallen when the luster of these words were undimmed by after treachery—when his heart might have been adjudged incapable of other coinage; but he sullied the reputation he had won, and while honored and trusted by his unsuspecting country he sought to barter its liberties for the enemy's gold.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REVELATION OF DARKMAN.

THE loss of Montgomery, the capture of Morgan and his force, and the disabling of Colonel Arnold, were serious misfortunes to so small a band as that which still remained before Quebec; but, there was another source of apprehension in the distance—the probability of an attack by the British upon the besiegers. The wary Carleton, however, had little faith in the devotion of the *habitans* of the town he guarded, who, he suspected, only required the liberty of his absence to express feelings which they endeavored to conceal, and which might induce them to open the gates to those whom he had

with difficulty repulse. Therefore he contented himself with great vigilance in watch and ward, and slumbered untroubled on his couch, though guarded by his soldiery and encircled by strong walls.

As soon as Felix had executed the directions received from Colonel Arnold which were calculated to provide against contingencies, he directed his footsteps toward the quarters of poor Darkman. He encountered the surgeon, who informed him that the recovery of the wounded soldier was impossible; but that he had expressed a desire to see him immediately. At this information, and in deep affliction, he sought the patient's couch.

"My voice is weak," said Darkman, as Felix entered; "my strength is failing, and my hours on earth are of small number. There is a secret in my heart, where it has so long slumbered, that death tells me will die unless quickly revealed. Slumbered! What a term! As fire slumbers in the maddened brain; as crime slumbers in the guilty heart; as murder slumbers in the felon breast—so has this festering secret cursed me with its torments." Then making an effort to cast off these troubling thoughts, he continued: "Despite this unseemly raving, Captain Temple, I am a penitent to you, to your family, and to my God. A few minutes to compose my feelings and I will commence a narrative that, if I mistake not, will soon change the sympathy depicted on your face to feelings of hatred and reproach."

The sufferer closed his eyes as if to commune with himself. Felix was astonished at the language used by this soldier of the ranks, and yet more so at the reference made to his family. His thoughts recurred to the mystery of his father's death, his brother's disappearance, and then he shed a tear on his dear mother's memory; and while this tear yet glazed his eye, the dying penitent awoke from his mental dream, and without further prelude thus commenced his narrative:

"Darkman is not my name, nor was it adopted until my crimes were unfitted for the day. Then I branded myself with it in reproach, and as a mask to that of a son no longer worthy of his sire. Your father and I were once devoted friends. In our childhood, in our boyhood, and as fellow-students we were inseparable. Our fathers occupied adjoining properties in Massachusetts, and were regarded as wealthy and prosperous residents. When we quitted college and returned home to assist our parents in the management of their estates, we were rarely a day asunder. The forest-road that led from his residence to mine, shaded with lofty pines and noble elms, continually clattered with our horses' hoofs as we sought each other in every division of the day.

"One summer there came a lady from Virginia on a visit to a neighboring landholder. She was beautiful, young, and accomplished. We both met her frequently in society, and in our hours of confidence we spoke of her attractions; but, after a time she ceased to be the subject of our conversation—her beauty had eaten into our hearts—we were unconscious rivals. We were less seen on that

broad avenue of pines and elms, and once or twice we accidentally met at the house of the fair Virginian whom so short a time before we had always visited together. The lady, amiable to both, gave preference to neither, though I sometimes thought that when your father spoke, she listened to the deep melody of his voice with more attention than when addressed by me. This suspicion hastened my decision, and fearing that his handsome person might render my suit more hazardous if he pleaded first, I resolved to declare my love to the fair enchantress.

“One afternoon I mounted my horse and left my father’s house hoping to return the accepted suitor of Angelica. I rode slowly, through the forest, deep in thought. It was an epoch in my life, and although I did not anticipate rejection, still there was a fluttering at my heart that lessened my haste to hear my doom pronounced. I reached the residence where Angelica was visiting. All was in profound repose. The day was intensely warm, and the men had abandoned the occupations of the farm, the cattle had retired from their sultry pastures in search of a cooler refuge, and the household was so still that a general *siesta* seemed to pervade all that appertained to life.

“I knew that Angelica did not slumber. I knew that her favorite resort at this calm hour was in a myrtle bower made fragrant by the climbing woodbine, the clematis, and the rose. Over the mossy sward I approached this sacred labyrinth, and as I inhaled its perfume, it seemed to incite my love. I paused at the flowery entrance, in doubt whether I ought to enter this sacred grotto unbidden; but the ardor of my love dispelled the hesitation, and I advanced. Angelica was there. She sat within the bower, the queen of all the flowers that bloomed around her. Her eyes were directed toward the ground, the long, dark lashes of which concealed their brilliancy; there was an expression of timid pleasure, almost delight, in the mouth, although the blush of modesty and confusion crimsoned her face; but at her feet, clasping her fair hand in his, and pleading in words I was too deaf to hear, knelt your father—my former friend—Abel Temple.

“Rage, jealousy, hatred and revenge chased reason from my brain, and swelled the vessels of my heart. With a maniacal yell I leaped upon my inclining rival. I fixed upon his throat. I heard a gurgling there which I then hoped was the last sound of life, and then darkness obscured my frantic mind. Still, my mind never abandoned those last thoughts—still I held my rival by the throat, and saw, with a laugh of joy, his approach to death. When I awoke from this fiendish dream I found my rival gone. I found myself in bed, my arms confined, and on each side my pillow stood a man stern and implacable.

“‘Where is Temple?’ I exclaimed, with vehemence.

“The men regarded each other in wonder, and one quitted the room. I repeated my demand, but received no answer. At this moment there entered the room an old gentleman supported by a younger man.

The latter made a sign, and in another instant my arms were released from the confinement of the restraining waistcoat. The old gentleman approached me, and in words as feeble as his step, he said :

“ ‘ My son, my Horace, behold your father ! ’ ”

“ ‘ My father ! ’ I exclaimed, and again the maniac fire was rushing to my brain. The stout, stern men advanced like vultures to their prey; but, the companion of my father waved them off, and dismissed them from the room. He then administered a potion from a glass, and I was more calm. Still, those last frightful words haunted me as I gazed upon the specter who called me his son, his Horace, and himself, my father !

“ I closed my eyes, shut out the scene before me, and retired within my thoughts. Then I remembered that my father was a hale and healthy man, tall and robust in figure, and of a cheerful and merry disposition, and altogether the reverse of this pretender. I turned to tell him so, and to desire him to be gone, when he was no longer present. In his place sat the good man who had administered the soothing drink. I felt grateful that he had quenched that fire, and said to him :

“ ‘ Who is the poor old man, who, in his feebleness, has claimed me for his son ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Your father,’ replied the visitor.

“ ‘ Impossible,’ I continued; ‘ there is not a feature that I revered so much. Could such decrepitude be effected in a night ? ’ ”

“ ‘ A night ! ’ exclaimed the visitor; ‘ a long, dark period like unto a night; but which is reckoned years in the progress of a life.’ ”

“ He placed his head upon his hand as he leaned upon my bed, while he seemed to muse. I, too, was endeavoring to comprehend his remarks, when he continued :

“ ‘ That period which you denominate a night has made no greater impression on the father than on the son. Could you, without pain, without excitement, look upon yourself? It will prepare you for much of the story that must one day be told.’ ”

“ I signified that I could bear any thing. He then cautiously handed me a mirror. I saw reflected upon its surface the visage of a man recovering from sickness. His eyes were deep in the sockets of the head, but they were bright. His cheek-bones were prominent and his cheeks were hollow, his lips were attenuated, his chin long and pointed, his nose prominent, and his beard was long and almost white. I examined the figure closely, and then looked inquiringly and timidly toward the visitor. He did not hesitate. He understood my question and replied :

“ ‘ It is yourself.’ ”

“ I was at first incredulous; but when I had made several gesticulations and saw them duly reflected in the mirror, and even pinched my face and pulled my hair, I became convinced, and cried :

“ ‘ What ! has all this age been acquired in a single night ? It was yesterday I sought the fair Angelica. It was yesterday that I punished with death the treachery of Temple, and it seems but an hour

ago since those two scoundrels whom you disturbed and drove away tore from my grasp his quivering body. How came all these years thus suddenly upon me? Is it not as wonderful that the father should know his son as that the son should repudiate the father?'

"The potion which had been administered as a measure of precaution by the doctor—for he was this kindly visitor—now operated and I fell into a slumber. At midnight I awoke. The good doctor was watching by my side. I took his hand and thanked him. I saw the joy that sparkled in his eye, not at the acknowledgment, but at the sense of reason that prompted such conduct. Again I asked for the mirror, and looked upon my aged and haggard countenance. I became distressed. I wondered if there were a curse upon our house that I should, in a night, be thrust from the summer of my days into mid-winter, and that my father—if that poor old man really stood in such relationship to me—should be thus loaded with years not rightfully his own. But, the observant doctor would not permit my mind to be thus troubled, and therefore disclosed how age had thus crept imperceptibly upon me. I had been a maniac twelve years; and during all the period of mental obscurantism, I had believed myself to be hobbling my rival suitor by the throat, and continued efforts were made by me to tighten the deadly grasp. The cries of Angelica, he told me, alarmed the slumbering household; your father was rescued from my fiendish claws, and, after a severe illness, recovered, and was married to the idol of my heart:—*Angelica was your mother*. The discretion that the worthy doctor had exercised, in unfolding these exciting occurrences, I have often admired. Every circumstance was so modified by this gentle narrator, that when he had concluded I could scarcely think that I had been listening to a recital of the sufferings that my conduct had occasioned. The next day I met my father, and from that moment I devoted myself to promote the comfort and happiness of those days which grief for me, it was plain, had contributed to lessen.

"I was soon able to quit my room and wander from the house. I felt like one restored to life after a lengthy slumber in the grave—restored with these years of oblivion added to my age, but with all the sorrows and agonies of my heart as acute as when my reason was eclipsed. I marveled at the impress of decay in all I saw. My horse, the fierce and gallant Lightfoot, who formerly exhibited such impatience for me to mount the saddle, and then bore me like a feather through the fields, was now unequal to my weight; and my matchless hounds, the faithful Wasp and Spider, who used to welcome my appearance with their guileless joy, now scarcely moved their rigid tails in recognition. Indeed, all that I had known in strength and vigor, I now saw in feebleness and age—on all sides life seemed hastening toward death. "Neither my father nor I ever went beyond the gardens or orchard of the house. We never rode or drove. He was too decrepit—and I hated the scenery which once contributed to my happiness. Besides, I devoted my attentions to my father's comfort; for I was not insensible to the severity of the

sufferings he had endured for me. One evening, as we sat together in a room which looked upon the garden, and watched the gradual decline of day, my father hobbled to the couch on which I rested, and, taking my hand, he said :

“ Horace, I have not long to live, and there is yet a painful secret to unfold that must reach your ear from no other lips than mine. My utterance is weak, emotion chokes me, and I must speak in few words. Can you attend to me ? ”

“ He was greatly agitated. I implored him to be calm, for that the frowns or smiles of fortune were alike indifferent to me. He then revealed to me that his estate was mortgaged even beyond its value. He explained that, to carry out some vast speculations, he had raised money on the whole of his property; but that grief for me had lessened his energies, affected his capabilities, and he was ruined. The circumstance did not affect me in the least; but, when my father added that the mortgagee was your grandfather who was dead, and that the estate was now at the mercy of your father, I thought a second madness would have seized me. A terrible agony pierced my brain, and the blood seemed rushing through the various arteries to my heart to be heated at its furnace, when I was recalled from the darkness to which I was receding, by a deep groan that escaped my father, and his falling into his chair. I leaped from my seat upon the couch, shook off my coming frenzy, and summoned assistance. But my poor father had spoken his last words. Two hours later he unclosed his glassy eyes, he seemed to recognize me as I supported his head, then softly pressing my hand, he ceased to breathe.

“ My sufferings were intense, and the worthy doctor used every effort to calm my grief. At length the funeral came. I saw my poor father placed beside his wife, whose coffin had been mouldering many years, and then I sought that house where I felt I no longer had a right. The numerous friends who had attended the interment departed, and I was that night left alone in the mansion of my father, which I must on the coming day resign to the enemy who had so treacherously deprived me of my happiness.

“ I had imagined the hungry claimant on my father almost following in the returning funeral *cortege*, and was astounded the next morning not to perceive his creatures at the door. I esteemed not this tardiness, and was impatient to be gone. I wrote sternly to the lawyer of your father, desiring that he would no longer detain me where I was as the mere guardian of a property rightfully said to be his client's. He replied, that Mr. Temple was in Virginia; but that he had full authority to state that he had no claim upon the estate in question; that during the elder Mr. Temple's life, some kind of deed had been executed between him and Mr. Layton (my father), but that his client had repudiated the instrument, and it had been destroyed. He added, that the property was in possession of its heir.

“ My mind was thoroughly diseased. I could not esteem a magnanimity so characteristic of my early friend. I became incensed at his presumptuous generosity. I wrote instantly to the lawyer and in

sisted upon the enforcement of the original terms, or I should consider the waiving of such a claim an atonement for some atrocious fraud practiced upon my confiding parent at a period of great family calamity. The lawyer laconically responded that it was futile for him to argue such a case. His only instructions were that Mr. Temple disavowed all claim upon the property of the late Mr. Layton, and he trusted that the correspondence would thus end.

“I was more incensed; but not less determined in my course of action. I thought I penetrated the insidious design of this false friend. He hoped by the restoration of these acres to compensate me for the loss of the fair Angelica and twelve years of life of which he had pillered me. I would not, however, thus absolve him. I held to my revenge, and would not barter so sweet a solace even for my coveted heritage.

“I sent for the good doctor. I confided to him the state of my affairs, the dying revelation of my father, and the subsequent correspondence with the lawyer. I begged him to take charge of the estate, for that I rejected it with disdain. That he would annually, during his life, and through his executors after his decease, offer to father, son, and all succeeding heirs of the Temple family, the estate, with all its properties and proceeds from that moment, and this proffer to be continued until the estate was accepted. He exhorted me to weigh with more justice the generous conduct of the noble Temple. He reminded me that the deed was destroyed upon the death of the elder Mr. Temple—eight years before the period I speak of—even when I was hopelessly afflicted, and might be considered as a grateful acknowledgement of the hospitality so freely extended to young Temple in happier days. I was inexorable, and reluctantly the good doctor consented to discharge my trust. The deeds were drawn and executed, and, deeply affected at the parting, and receiving a promise from the doctor that he would reside upon the premises and see proper care taken of my old horse and dogs, I quitted the mansion of my father for ever. I was not a beggar. I possessed ten thousand dollars from my mother; but this reflection gave me no pleasure. I cared not for wealth.

“I passed from the old homestead to the wood, buried in the somberness of my thoughts, without any settled plan as to whither I should bend my steps; but well satisfied to be unsheltered by its roof, I unconsciously strolled beneath the shade of the pines and elms of that very avenue which was to your father and myself so long a path to happiness and joy. I had not been there for many years, nor was I aware of my presence in that shunned locality, until a voice exclaimed:

“‘Horace!’

“To my ear, the hissing of the viper, the roar of the lion, or the howl of the rapacious wolf would have been welcome sounds, compared with that bland voice which now called me by a name it had infringed. I did not turn toward the speaker. I dared not raise my eyes, for I found that the sight of him who thus addressed

me would urge me to a vengeance which the demon at my elbow whispered was in my power. It was your father who had thus spoken. He was accompanied by his elder son, his namesake, Abel, and despite my marked avoidance, he attempted to approach me.

“ ‘Horace,’ he repeated, with a pathos that still dwells upon my ear, ‘I have been long absent, I have been ill—very, very ill. The intelligence of your restoration, of the decease of your dear father—dear to both—reached me the same hour. Despite my sufferings, I hastened hither in hope to condole, to sustain, to—’

“ ‘Silence ! silence !’ I vociferated; ‘I will not listen to such language. I detect in it a wily stratagem again to win my faith. The vision is never absent from my eye, where I behold you treacherously prostrate at a shrine at which both could not be permitted to worship. That villainy plunged me into years of darkness, and when I again emerged into the light, it was to hear that your vows had been consummated on my calamity.’

“ Your father came a step nearer, raised his arms to enforce the words he was about to use. In my passionate blindness, I thought I saw a weapon in his hand, and in an instant I took a pistol from my breast and presented it. He was astounded at my ferocity, and his son, alarmed at this demonstration, rushed between us. A struggle ensued, the pistol was discharged, and your father staggered and fell to the ground. Your brother uttered cries of the wildest kind, and then rushed into the forest. Withhold your judgment,” continued Darkman, as he perceived the agitated and reproachful expression in the face of Felix, “for I was not the murderer of your father. I never had my finger upon that fatal trigger, nor can I account for its discharge. In that great book, the records of which are unerring, I am not registered as the intentional slayer of your father, although, had I not produced the weapon, the deed would have remained undone.

“ But to return. I cast myself upon the ground. I seized his hand. I pressed it to my heart. I expected him to speak. I called him by the term so long unused, of ‘dear Abel.’ I told him that all was forgotten but his danger, and that it needed but one word from him to give happiness to a heart in despair. Alas, I spoke but to the dead. The placid expression of his face, so noble in its sweetness, was rigid and inflexible. Oh, what an anomaly is man ! With a mind misshapen by malignity, I had rejected the proffered friendship of my former friend ; but a few minutes later, when he had entered the gates of death, and was beyond my reach, I would have gladly yielded the remainder of my life for one kind word from that calm, speechless mouth.

“ Then I thought of that poor fatherless boy who had fled into the forest. I followed the stricken fawn, but his cries had ceased—I had no guide in my pursuit. After long traversing the woods in vain, I reached a cottage. I knew it well. It had once been the residence of the mother of one of our female servants. The old lady had died there. I dashed open the door, and to my astonish-

ment beheld her daughter; but before I could address a word to her, the cry for which I had so intently listened was uttered in the room, and, crouched in a corner, upon his hands and knees, was poor Temple's heir. *He was an idiot.* He had taken refuge there, and the poor girl had, by her kindness, soothed his fears until I appeared. I used every effort to entice him from the cottage; but he exhibited so much horror at my presence, and supplicated the girl so piteously to shield him from me, that I left him, directing Rachael Warner—for that was the woman's name—to devote her whole care to him, and that I would reward her, and forced upon her all the money that I then had.

“ I returned to the spot where the dead body of Abel Temple laid. It was gone. It had been discovered and removed. I followed along that avenue to the house, and soon found that the remains of my poor friend had been conveyed there. Again I returned to where he had fallen—a fascination bound me to the place, and until the eastern horizon warned me of coming day, I did not move. Then I sought the recesses of the forest, and appeared no more till night. For months I lived the life of a recluse, sleeping in caves by day, and walking at those hours when wild animals seek their prey. My first visit was ever to the avenue. The spot where your father fell was sacred ground to me. I had raised a mound upon it, and covered it with the softest moss, and at its head had planted a young pine, and at its foot a willow, and there I every night spent many hours.

“ Perhaps six months had thus passed away, when, one evening, issuing rather earlier from my lair—for no one now passed this fearful place at night, and rarely in the day—I repaired to my cherished grave, and while standing over it in solemn reverence, a cry, similar to that once uttered by your brother, rung through the woods; twice it was repeated, as it receded toward the cottage where I had left him. I could not follow. That cruel scream revived all the agonies of that fearful murder. With wounds opened anew and bleeding profusely, I again staggered to my hiding-place, where my couch was the wild heather, and my mansion was a cave. Next night, at the hour when guilt can stalk about with less hazard of detection, I resolved to visit the cottage of Rachel Warner, to learn if that poor boy had been returned, wreck as he was, to his suffering mother. A fire was smouldering on the hearth, but Rachel was away. All night I watched before that slumbering fire, and when morning came, and the sun lighted up the forest, I would not quit my post. Again darkness fell upon the earth, and I, alarmed at this woman's absence, endeavored to gain information respecting Temple's son, and learned from some boys, who knew me not, that young Abel Temple never had returned to his mother's home. This was another dagger in my bleeding heart—another firebrand thrown on my burning brain. I returned to the abandoned cottage, and after prosecuting the most diligent search to obtain some clue to the runaways, I found, written upon the inside of a cupboard-door, with chalk, the following notice :

“ ‘ Sum'at, this night, have made the poor boy feel all the horrors, as when he comed to my door, six months ago. He can't be quiet.

He will go away. He will leave the forest. I love the poor boy. He calls me mother, and I call him my son, Job, and I 'must go wid 'im. If Mister Layton ever come here agin, and find we're gone, be sure I'll take care on the boy."

"I was deeply affected, as I, with difficulty, deciphered this painful announcement. Not only had Abel Temple's heir gone forth an idiot and leggar into the heartless world, but his fond mother, Angelica, was pining in secret and in despair to clasp her lost son once more to her bosom, before she joined her husband in eternity.

" 'What right,' I exclaimed, 'has this unnatural woman to steal from his mother the affections of her son? By what right has this usurper retained him in her cottage, while his mother's hands are hourly raised toward heaven to implore his restoration? What right has this false mother to call that poor boy Job, whom his father has named Abel?'

"But, no sooner had I given utterance to these and other noisy evidences of my anger, than I remembered how little of wrong there was in Rachel's doings. Abel Temple had sought refuge in her home—she gave him protection. She knew not that his idiocy had been the revulsion of an hour. I had followed the child to Rachel's house, and had committed him to her guardianship—gave him no name—and then for months absented myself. I was the culprit, and that night I left the forest to repair my fault. I traveled from State to State in search of those two wanderers without success. Then I heard of the death of Abel's widow, Angelica. My grief was unbounded, though unseen. I made a pilgrimage to Abel's grave. I cast myself upon that still-cherished mound, and implored that both he and Angelica would bear witness that whatever crimes I had committed toward them, they had been involuntary—that my hand was not spontaneous in Abel's murder, nor had I willingly forged one of those bitter sorrows that bore his widow to the grave.

"One night I was repeating these supplications at the grave. It was intensely dark—not a star was visible in the vault above, nor a sound but the occasional rushing of the wind through the avenues of the forest, or the howlings of the famished beasts as they sought their prey. Yet, even these were hushed, when, rising from my fallen posture, I beheld just beneath the willow I had planted with such care and reverence, the same Abel Temple and Angelica that I had known in life. Speech and motion were forbidden me; but, although I was transfixed, I was free from those feelings of alarm and horror still to be induced by supernatural visitations. Their figures shone out from the obscurity of the forest—they were in radiance, and so sweet a smile suffused their ethereal visages as they gazed on me that my heart warmed with their inspiration. I coveted the worst pangs of death to reach such glorious life. But such visions are too celestial to dwell long on mortal eye—it soon disappeared—the wind resumed its journey through the forest—the hungry beasts their screams; but my heart was lightened of much of its terrible reproach. These smiles seemed to imply an acceptance

of my penitence, and they conveyed balm and solace to a breast that had been long unvisited by such feelings.

"I left the cenotaph which I had erected to the memory of my early friend, and again sought his idiot son; but disappointment revived my former wretchedness and self-reproach. I left the country, visited distant climes, but remorse could not be banished by diversion in other hemispheres, and I returned to America.

"Here the cry, 'to arms,' resounded through the land. I saw men who were busily occupied in the field, the workshop, the office, and on the bench, abandon their engagements as they heard that the magic banner of liberty had been unfurled, and hastened to sustain their valorous brethren. I, an idler, could not allow these thrifty men to outrun me in the race of patriotism. I, too, marched to Cambridge, and as I traversed the rude camp, I was electrified by the name of Temple among its martial tenants. I sought this representative of a house I loved so well, and I found you. I determined to serve under you, and, by devoting myself to you, atone in some measure for the early orphancy to which I had consigned you.

"While in camp I was one evening standing near my tent, when I perceived you engaged in conversation with a tall handsome person. I was astounded. I thought that the grave had yielded its dead. Every limb shook with the weakness of terror, still I moved forward to obtain a nearer view of the familiar figure. My eyes traveled over that manly form, and studied that vacant countenance, and I at once saw the semblance of the father in the idiot son. I soon inquired who it was with you, and ascertained that it was Job Witless—that he and his mother had resided in Boston many years in poverty, and those who had known him so long clad in rags wondered where he had obtained the habiliments in which he was then dressed. The battle of Bunker's Hill ensued. There again I met the boy, and, attaching myself to him, gained as much of his history as he had wit to tell, yet quite sufficient to convince me that his reputed mother was Rachel Warner, and that he was no other than the long-sought son of Abel Temple."

"Job my brother!" exclaimed Felix, who had used every exertion to repress his feelings as he listened to the fearful narrative of the dying soldier. "I feel that you are right. Conviction has entered my heart without further evidence. I cherish a brother's love for that poor idiot, and to restore his exiled faculties shall be my future care."

"Job Witless is your brother," resumed the soldier, Darkman. "You see in him the figure and features of your father, though he lacks that air of intelligence in his face which left him with his reason on that fatal night. I used every effort to procure an interview with Rachel, but the British posts were so jealously guarded that I could not enter Boston; and while I was yet engaged in planning some device by which I might avoid their vigilance, we were ordered on this expedition, and I deferred further action until my return

That is denied me. I am summoned to another world. Let it not be forgotten that Abel Temple is heir to the estate still in the guardianship of the good doctor. It is a fine property; and now that the only impediment is about to be removed forever, that induced the rejection of it by his father, there will be no scruple in acceding to my dying request, that Abel may at once possess it.

"My tale is told—my guilt unfolded—my life is ebbing; but I am yet permitted sufficient power to ask my last earthly boon of man—it is that you will not condemn me to enter the presence of my Maker without your pardon. Forgive me, Felix Temple, for the murder of my friend, your father—for the broken heart of Angelica, your mother—for the idiocy and suffering poverty of Abel Temple, your brother. I have endeavored to atone by years of penitence—"

"Oh, do not struggle thus with expiring life to implore my pardon," said Felix, taking the dying soldier's hand, and pressing it to his heart. "I have heard you with deep sympathy, and you have my forgiveness. When I, by my care and attention, shall have dispelled that veil which clouds my brother's reason, then our first act shall be to kneel at the mossy cenotaph you raised to the memory of your friend, and there, in returning our thanks, implore a blessing upon our father, our mother, and upon Horace Layton."

The soldier smiled, fell back, and died—he had expired in the ecstasy of his excessive joy.

Felix retired from the room deeply affected at the narrative he had heard. The mystery of years had been unfolded in an hour, and the strange devotion and terror exhibited alternately by Darkman toward Felix was now explained. As soon as Felix was sufficiently composed he visited the sick couch of Colonel Arnold, and disclosed to him the extraordinary revelations of the night. Arnold considerably intimated his feeling, and after soothing him by his kindness, said :

"I shall have dispatches for General Washington to-morrow or next day. After you have attended the obsequies of your father's friend, you will prepare to be the bearer of my letters to the camp at Cambridge."

Felix fully estimated the delicacy of this kindness, which Arnold had sufficient penetration to observe, and in two days the last rites were paid to the remains of poor Horace Layton, and Felix Temple was on his way to the environs of Boston.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOB MISJUDGES THE FICTION OF THE STAGE.

AGNES retired from the scene of Bunker's Hill before the smoke had sufficiently dispersed to disclose the carnage of the battle; but her terror increased as the roar of musketry and cannon shook the city of Boston to its foundations; nor did she find the usual comfort in her cousin, for the vivacity of Emily had sunk beneath the appalling struggle of the hour. In the evening Mr. Falkland announced the result of the conflict but the anguish of Agnes was not lessened by this intelligence; it brought no assurance that Felix lived. While her heart was thus racked with grief, Job reached the house. They recognized his smiling, simple face. Emily quitted her cousin's side, welcomed the return of this herald from the field, and soon extracted from him, with readiness and clearness of which she alone was capable, that Felix had escaped unwounded. The battle seemed to have lost one-half its horrors now that Felix, and, perhaps, Job, were not among the slain.

Many months passed, and Agnes heard nothing from Felix. While he was braving the dangers of the wilds of Maine, floating down threatening rapids, wading through deep rivers, encountering rain, and snow, and ice, and hunger, she thought him one of those gallant men with whom Washington was beleaguering Boston; and while he was ranked as one of the dauntless twenty five who formed the "forlorn-hope" in attacking the famed city Quebec, she deplored, as the only hardship to which she believed him then exposed, the comfortless position of camp life.

Job was the constant visitor of Agnes and Emily. They had placed him and his mother in a far better dwelling. The gratitude of the poor woman to see her son so comfortable was boundless, and could not be silenced. Job was changed in habits. He now detested not only rags, but would not permit the slightest soil to disfigure his attire. He no longer indulged in the lengthy absences to which he was so addicted. He no longer assisted in the occupations of his once dear friend and employer, Ghoul, the sexton. This change had been effected by the influence of Emily, whose every syllable he so revered, that no sooner was it uttered than it became a fixed principle in his heart—a ritual of his life.

The wounds of Colonel Bland were healed, but the spirit of re-

venge implanted in his heart was unremoved. Twice had he almost been rid of a hated rival—twice had he been foiled. But his arm was only strengthened for another fight by this miscarriage.

Mr. Falkland disliked these troubled times. He loved his king and his country; but he loved them in conjunction, and now that they were to be disjoined, he knew not on which to confer this patronage. However, he advocated peace, and wished to remain neutral. This feeling was well construed by the English, and he was esteemed and visited by the army. At this time his association was yet more prized, for as Washington so closely invested the city that provisions could no longer be procured from the country, and the British were confined to ocean rations—salt beef, salt pork, and other saline delicacies—the generous table and dainty wines of such a host were not without their influence upon the heart.

The British, though thus doomed to the penitential diet of saline fare, did not yield to despondency. There was a spice of merriment and disposition to be gay even under this affliction of the feasting islanders, and to while away the hours of inaction they established a theater. The officers of the royal George became authors and actors, and in their love of martial pieces impersonated all the great heroes of bygone ages, to the satisfaction of themselves and the amusement and admiration of the dames and demoiselles of Boston.

Agnes and Emily usually attended these representations and they were always assigned a position of distinction. One evening they had taken their seats in the theater, and were awaiting the uprising of the curtain, when, to their utter astonishment, they espied Job. He was standing in the orchestra with his back to the stage, and contemplating with apparent admiration the brilliant assemblage. Emily thought that he never appeared so handsome. The excitement of the moment had driven from the expression of his face the old idiotic vacancy, and his tall figure, high forehead and prominent features really impressed all present with the superiority of his mien. It was, however, with profound regret that the young ladies beheld him there. They knew his impetuous feelings, and feared that the novel scenes which he was about to witness might urge him to some act of indiscretion. While Emily was thinking how she could contrive to withdraw him from the theater, the curtain rose, and Job turned rapidly toward the stage without observing her.

Colonel Bland represented one of the chief characters in the piece, and, by a singular coincidence, the heroine was named Emily. There were rival suitors for her hand, and the Colonel was he whom she regarded with indifference. Undismayed by her frowns, Ferdinand (the Colonel) resolved to achieve his triumph by villainy. Then ensued the struggle, and then the deep sympathy of Job induced him to watch narrowly the conduct of the treacherous Ferdinand. He had heard his plans disclosed upon the stage while he soliloquized in seeming loneliness, and he was prepared to enter the field as the heroine's champion when she might be in need. The passing scene engrossed his whole attention. He seemed insensible that others

than himself were present, so profoundly was he enwrapped in the reality of all passing before his gaze. As the denouement approached, Job became yet more excited. He saw Emily lost in the windings of a forest. It was night. The obscurity was so great that many of the causes of terror were concealed. In vain she sought around for refuge—in vain she implored Heaven to her aid—she heard but the mocking echo of her prayers. Presently a stealthy figure advanced from the concealment of a cavern. He was enveloped in a cloak, but Job perceived that the face was that of Ferdinand. He approached the bewildered maiden—he called her by her name—he passed his strong arm around her waist, and, despite her screams, was about to bear her to his cave, when Job leaped with the agility of an antelope from the orchestra to the stage, recovered the fair Emily—despite her redoubled screams and the tenacity with which she clung to her abductor—and was about to avenge the insult upon the astounded Ferdinand, when a fourth character appeared upon the scene. This visitor was in the costume of a British sergeant, and advanced in great haste and excitement from among the trees in the back-ground, exclaiming :

“The Yankees are attacking our works on Bunker Hill!”

Even the indulgent audience were struck with this discordancy, accustomed as they were to the eccentricities of these martial authors in producing stage-effect. Few had observed whence Job had emerged, and those few imagined that his *debut* from the orchestra had been so planned.

While Job still grasped the screaming heroine—while the affrighted sergeant occupied the front of the stage, wondering that his words had not produced greater sensation—and while the baffled Ferdinand stood amazed at the violence done him and his acting—the audience testified their appreciation of what they could not comprehend by rounds of applause. But as soon as this burst of enthusiasm had subsided, and quiet was restored, General Howe, to whom one portion at least of the declamation was intelligible, arose from his seat, and exclaimed :

“Officers, to your alarm-posts!”

This, at least, was no farce. The burlesque was ended. Ferdinand cast down his tragic weapon and decamped; the sergeant rushed back into the woods whence he had appeared, and the fair Emily, struggling from the embrace of her champion, threaded the intricacies of the forest quite easily, and vanished in its foliage without speaking one word of gratitude to Job. At the words of General Howe the scarlet coats disappeared from the assemblage as if by magic, the ladies followed, and when the theater was nearly tenantless, and the warm-hearted idiot remained upon the stage-floor, troubled and confused at all this change, a silvery voice sounded in his ear. It said but “Job,” yet it dispelled his dream. He knew that soft summons, and with joy sparkling in his full, dark eyes, he was soon beside the fair speaker.

“I fear that I detained you and my uncle,” said Emily to Agnes

on their return home; but I could not abandon Job when I knew that in another minute he would be derided by the rude workmen of the stage. I lingered and called him to me, and entreated him to proceed directly home."

"My dear Emily, you were right," replied Agnes, and then added, rather humorously: "I would not have done less for Job: but, after the reverence he so gallantly displayed for the name of Emily, thought the privilege of rescue peculiarly your own; and I confess you discharged your duty far more gracefully than the Thespian heroine."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FORTIFYING OF DORCHESTER HEIGHTS.

THE disclosure which had been made by Darkman to Felix, spurred him on his journey. The mystery which clouded the death of his father and the disappearance of his brother was now dispersed, and he was anxious to acknowledge the latter though he feared that his dark mind would never fully comprehend the nature of their alliance. Guided by a faithful Indian, and followed by six men, he plunged into the wilderness and retraced those steps which had nearly been so fatal to the force with which he had marched. He was homeward bound—every step of his bleak path brought him nearer to Agnes and Job, and he passed as buoyantly over the frozen snow as if it were strewn with mosses, and while his companions shrunk from the fury of the northern wind, he smiled as if it were but a refreshing breeze. With these hopeful and elated feelings, he reached the camp at Cambridge. Washington received him with his usual kindness, though he deplored that he was the bearer of no better tidings from Quebec. The commander had hoped that from its well-filled store-houses he should have been enabled to clothe and shoe his motley and ragged forces, and to have withdrawn that material of war, the want of which had kept him in danger and inaction for many months.

In a few days—which were occupied by Felix in the fruitless search for information as to Job—more active operations were reported, and next came a welcome promotion of Felix as Major of a regiment. It was soon determined to garrison Dorchester Heights, and to cover this strategem, the guns in position on Lechmere's Point, commenced to cannonade the city. The British responded with energy—the feint succeeded, and the march commenced. The regiment of Felix was among the first to move forward. The sun shone brightly; but not a syllable was uttered by the men, and the whole force with three hundred wagons of stores, and the heavy ordnance, effected

this hazardous passage, unsuspected by the British. Arrived at the scene, the men commenced their duties. The engineer of Breed's Hill was there to direct them. Washington was also present, and at his cheering words, the men drove their mattocks deep into the frozen earth, and labored with an energy that defied exhaustion.

The morning came, and with it the surprise. The light revealed this busy hive of men intrenching themselves in the earth. The soldiers gazed timidly from the land—the sailors uneasily from the harbor—both thought that missiles hurled from such a sovereign height, must scatter destruction on both ship and shore. The Admiral quitted his flag-ship as the General left his bed, and they met as if by appointment, to discuss how to remove the foe. General Howe viewed the operations long and studiously through a powerful glass, and then, as if more impressed with the adroitness and industry displayed than with the peril which threatened him, he exclaimed:

“These Americans have done as much in a single night as my army would accomplish in a week.”

Admiral Shouldham was dissatisfied at the remark, and turning abruptly to General Howe, he inquired, bluntly, if he intended to dislodge them.

“Certainly,” responded the courteous Howe. “It will be a gallant feat for Percy; but it must be deferred till night.”

“As you will, General,” said the bluff sailor; “but these waters will be too hot for me, with the Americans upon those heights. You are astonished at the work these Yankees have completed in a night—they will double it in a day; but, I suppose it will only make the expedition more worthy of its leader.”

The commanders of the sea and land forces now separated, the one to keep a vigilant eye upon the safety of his ships, and the other to arrange an expedition which did not quiet the city.

During this discussion in the British camp, the Americans upon the heights were making every effort to complete their works. Their officers moved through the trenches, encouraging the labors of the men, and even Washington, while he beheld with astonishment in the morning the extent of their toil, still said that much more was necessary to insure success. Artillery was planted in position upon the forts, and upon the heights was placed a line of barrels filled with stones, that they might be rolled upon the British as they attempted to ascend the hill, and thus co-operate with grape and canister to sweep away the foe.

In the mean while, General Howe watched the Americans jealously from his threatened camp. He saw them, like a busy mound of ants, using every nerve to better their defenses, and that every hour of labor placed some additional obstruction in his way; still he flattered himself that the morrow would see the British flag waving from those already formidable works. When night ensued, and the hour thought favorable for attack had arrived, Earl Percy, with two thousand five hundred chosen men, stood ready for battle at the water's edge; but

the east wind blew and a storm arose, which baffled every effort of the seamen to control the boats, and in the face of this danger, the enterprise was deferred until the following morning. At earliest dawn, the young Earl Percy, anxious to redeem the defeat of Lexington, again marched his men to the place of embarkation; but the rage of the sea was ireful as before, and the rain descended in such torrents as to endanger the footing of the men in their hill attack. Howe ordered them to their quarters till night. The night, however, brought no improvement in the weather, and Earl Percy was directed not to muster his soldiers, and when the next morning the wind subsided and the sea was calm, the American works were thought to be too far advanced to be assailed without much hazard. The undertaking was therefore abandoned.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EVACUATION OF BOSTON.

Long before the assault, Boston had become thoroughly demoralized. The soldiers, encouraged by the derisive and contemptuous language used by their officers to those inhabitants suspected of sympathy with the patriots, began to pillage their stores and houses, nor were these rapacious rascals too discriminating in their thefts, for they often availed themselves of the richer booty of the loyal Tories. Howe used every effort to discourage these robberies, and his punishments were severe and unrelenting. Court-martials were almost hourly held, and criminals were as frequently sentenced to receive four hundred, six hundred and even one thousand lashes, which were immediately inflicted, and the barrack yards of the soldiers were never free from the cries and supplications of the guilty sufferers. On one occasion, a woman—the notorious receiver of stolen property, and the wife of a British soldier—received a hundred lashes on her bare back, a portion of which was administered at several public places in the city, and she was dragged from station to station at the cart's tail. The provost-marshal, too, went his rounds with the hangman at his elbow, that in case any violation of the law might occur under the eye of that important functionary, it might be atoned for on the moment of its committal.

Few ladies ventured from the security of their houses, the shutters of which were closed and the doors securely fastened, while their owners shivered behind them in terror and apprehension. But, Agnes had another cause of anxiety. Many months had passed away since she had heard from Felix. She believed him still in the army of the besiegers, and as little or no fighting had occurred, she hoped that he was in safety. She daily mounted to the lofty house

top, and gazing toward those points occupied by the Americans, she tortured her eyes to discern one of that bold array, whose image was engraven on her heart.

Mr. Falkland with the feelings of the royalist and the patriot still balanced in his mind, made every effort to ameliorate the sufferings of both parties, and rarely quitted his daughter and niece but on some embassy of kindness. He was passing through an obscure street, one evening, on his return home from one of these charitable visits, when he was stopped by a ruffian, enveloped in a military coat, who demanded his watch and money, and as these were not immediately surrendered, the fellow felled him to the ground and commenced a search for these valuables. Mr. Falkland, recovering from the effects of the blow, uttered loud cries for assistance; but the assailant, enraged at this noisy resistance, unclasped a knife, and was preparing to use more fatal violence, when he was suddenly seized from behind by some powerful grasp and hurled into the center of the road, and while he scrambled off as well as his bruised limbs would permit him, his victim was assisted to rise, and then a familiar voice uttered in his ear:

“Job just in time—Job frightened sojer.”

It was the gallant Job, who had heard the cry for help, and had reached the spot in time to rescue the father of his benefactress from the murderer's steel.

“Is it Job?” exclaimed Mr. Falkland, as he pressed the hand of the idiot. “Brave boy, you can not be an idiot thus to know right from wrong. Support me, good Job, for I am injured. Come with me and receive the gratitude of those dear girls at home.

Job smiled, as if he only heeded his conquest of the soldier, and when they reached the residence of Mr. Falkland, and the ladies learned the services he had rendered, their kind acknowledgments almost bewildered the poor idiot.

This was the state of Boston and of the Falkland family, when the dread guns of Lechmere's Point opened upon the city. The British soon replied to this fearful fire, and the roar of these fierce antagonists made the city sleepless throughout that terrible night. The morning disclosed that this thundering was but a stratagem of Washington, to enable him to gain possession of Dorchester Heights, and three days later, fire was commenced from these hills upon the city. It was the din of Howe's defeat. It was a cry of victory.

The following day, Mr. Falkland summoned Agnes and Emily to his library, and announced to them that the British had consented to abandon the city, that he, with the advice of Colonel Bland, had determined to accompany them, and that officer had just quitted him, to arrange for their instant departure. Both ladies were astounded. Agnes raised her hands and exclaimed:

“Oh, father! dear father! you will not permit this artful Briton to wean you from your love of this dear land. You will not allow his iniquitous counsel to triumph over your daughter's prayers. You will remain to welcome in victory the gallant defenders of the rights

of man. It must be so, dear father, for it would tarnish the unsullied honor of Felix Temple, to hear, as he entered Boston, that Agnes and her father had retreated with the enemy."

"Felix Temple is not with the army, Agnes," said Mr. Falkland, in a timid voice. "He some months since joined the expedition against Quebec, and as that failed, he may be a prisoner in that fortress."

But Agnes scarcely heard the completion of the sentence. The severity of this second grief completely overpowered her, and she fainted in the arms of her cousin. The devoted father was greatly alarmed. He exhorted his insensible daughter to return to life, and he would concur in all she desired. Emily, energetic in the work of restoration, vainly attempted to soothe the agitation of her uncle; but he only reproached himself the more bitterly for the disaster that he had occasioned. When at length, symptoms appeared of returning power, Mr. Falkland informed Emily that he would remain in Boston, and would seek Colonel Bland, to relieve him from the commissions with which he had so lately charged him. For this purpose he left the house; but another hand had interposed between the Colonel and the treacherous part that he was playing. As Mr. Falkland passed hastily along, he observed a crowd of persons assembled around a store, where he learned that a British officer had been accidentally killed. He entered the building, and there, upon the floor was spread the lifeless and still bleeding body of Colonel Bland. In an attempt to defend the store from pillage by the soldiers, he had received a bayonet wound, and expired without a groan. Mr. Falkland shed a tear over his really cherished friend, and did not separate himself from the body until a detachment of his own men arrived to remove it to its quarters.

When he was about to leave, he was informed that there had been another casualty in the fray, and that a man, severely wounded, was lying in the adjoining room. A slight groan reached his ear, and he approached the sufferer, when, to his astonishment, he recognized Job Witless.

"Poor Job! good Job!" exclaimed Mr. Falkland, "right glad am I that I can be of use. You shall be removed to my house. My daughter, Emily and your mother shall attend you and heal your wounds;" and he hastened to engage some men to convey Job on a litter, while the sufferer, cheered by promises dear to his idiot heart, repressed his groans, and awaited his friend's return.

The bearers came, and the wounded Job was soon passing through the streets, preceded by his patron. They reached the house. Mr. Falkland entered, and after ascertaining that Agnes was much better, he signed to Emily to follow him from the room, to whom he then related the wounded state of Job.

"Where is he?" exclaimed Emily, in agony. "Where is Job?" and she rushed toward the hall. There was poor Job lying on the stretcher, his face ghastly pale, his hand crimsoned with his own blood, and yet smiling as he heard the sweet voice of Emily. She

would not yield to the intense horror of her feelings. She ordered the men to convey him to a comfortable room, and with the same breath dispatched messages for his mother and the doctors. All came. The wounds were examined, dressed, and pronounced severe, but not fatal; but in the evening, fever ensued, which caused even those imperfect senses to be suspended, and Job's life to be placed in jeopardy for many weeks.

During this agitation in the family of Mr. Falkland, Boston was being evacuated. General Howe had consented to yield to Washington a camp he found untenable. What a departure to chronicle! Nearly a hundred vessels were in the harbor to receive the refugees. Forts were dismantled, and their guns and ammunition conveyed through the streets to the place of embarkation. Stores of every description were piled upon innumerable wagons and driven toward the vessels. These came from every avenue of the city; but all converged toward one, where the contention among the teamsters in swearing, and in acts of violence was most frightful.

But there was, besides this martial retreat, a civil exodus. The Tories had resolved to adhere to the fortunes of their British friends, and, like prudent men, were anxious to retain their goods and chattels in their service; but they beheld the crowded avenues with dismay. They dared not dispute with the followers of the fife and drum, and numbers stood all day with their furniture in lanes and alleys, awaiting a more tranquil hour, while thieves, availing themselves of the agitation of the time, would pay frequent visits to these Tory piles, and each time removed some article of value. The Whigs, having made fast their lower rooms, stood chuckling at the doleful plight of their antagonists in the streets and alleys, and exulting at the grand confusion of the decamping host. But the smiles of the satirists were not enduring. An order was issued to seize all woolen goods and convey them to the vessels. The soldiers assailed their doors; and they in turn had to yield to the strong—to see the goods so carefully selected, stripped from their well-stocked shelves, and borne off upon the shoulders of a rapacious enemy. At length the British navy left its moorings. Upon the troubled deck of the vessels stood mothers and daughters, supported in each other's arms, whose tearful eyes were directed toward those loved shores which they were leaving for the dangers of the sea. While the sharp sound of the drum announced to the patriot army the first victory of Washington—the first conquest of his men—Felix, to his unspeakable joy, was ordered into Boston. He received the most raptuous welcome. The cheers of the people were deafening. Men and women seized the hands of the soldiers, and walked with them folded within theirs; others offered them food and such little delicacies as their beleaguered city could afford. Slowly did Felix make his way through these grateful masses to his quarters, and even then he had much difficulty to escape from their overwhelming kindness; but, his duty discharged, his heart was intent on another object. He sought the residence of Agnes. He reached the house—it was not

abandoned—he asked for Agnes. His voice was heard by the ready ear of that fair creature—she hysterically pronounced his name—all fears then vanished, and in another minute Felix folded her in his arms.

Mr. Falkland soon heard that Felix had arrived, and advanced to welcome him.

“I have made my election, Felix,” he said; “doubt no longer agitates my mind. I, like you, take refuge beneath the shield of liberty, and range myself with her sons, although I still hope that we may attain our rights without the sword.”

Felix had scarcely responded to this agreeable announcement, when Emily appeared. She was pale, and seemed much distressed.

“I know I am tardy in my welcome, Felix,” she said, “but deep sorrow is blended with our joy on this great and hallowed day. Poor Job—your friend, messenger, and preserver—lies wounded and in a most precarious state, in the adjoining room. The widow Witless died this morning. In her last hours she revealed to me that although she fostered Job she was not his mother—that her name was Rachel Warner; but that of the parentage of the poor idiot orphan she knew nothing.

“Let not the future welfare of poor Job disturb you, Emily,” said Mr. Falkland; “from this moment I take him to my guardianship, and will provide for him through life. Agnes, sweet child, idiot as he is, he shall be henceforth your brother and my son.”

“Noble uncle!” exclaimed Emily.

“Most worthy father!” said Agnes.

“Admirable man!” added Felix, who had listened with astonishment to the singularly confirmatory coincidence. “You know not how deeply I feel your generosity. You have disinterestedly cherished one whom you regard as a nameless idiot; but your hospitality and kindness has fallen on—my brother.”

“Your brother!” exclaimed all three, in astonishment.

“Yes, my father’s elder son,” said Felix, “who, in a moment of terror, sought refuge in the cottage of Rachel Warner, from one whom he thought his father’s murderer—and from that hour he was lost to his family.”

Felix then related his participation in the expedition to Quebec—its failure—the fatal consequence to Darkman, and his confession, contrition, and guiltlessness. Emily was especially affected during the recital, and frequently sobbed aloud.

In the evening Felix had a long consultation with the medical attendants, and a course of treatment was resolved upon by those persons which allowed much hope for the restoration of the faculties of their patient.

CHAPTER XX

“A UNION OF HEARTS, A UNION OF HANDS.”

DAYS and weeks passed away, and sometimes hope and sometimes hopelessness marked the progress of time. The fever had left the patient and the wounds were healing; but there was an inertness in the body—a slumbering of the mind, which it was thought would soon awaken either in irreclaimable idiocy or in lucidity. The event soon transpired. One morning, when the doctors paid their accustomed visit, and inquired of their patient as to his health, to their astonishment and delight, he responded:

“I am better.”

This satisfactory change they duly reported to Mr. Falkland and the ladies. It was the first time that Job had ever spoken in the first person after the frightful occurrence which deprived him of his reason. Emily entered the room. Job recognized her in an instant. His wan countenance beamed with pleasure as he beheld this sweet angel of his dreams. Agnes, Felix, and Mr. Falkland succeeded. He knew them all—each had a pleasing association in his mind. He regarded the period of his idiocy as a dream. He related many of the occurrences of those dark years as a matter of his visions, and no one attempted to undeceive him. His mind and body strengthened together. He soon rose from his bed, and was able daily to take exercise. Emily was his idol.

“Sit with me, Emily,” he would say, “and I am content. I am happy where you are—I am uneasy where you are not.”

When Felix disclosed to Job the nature of their relationship, he exhibited great emotion. He took his brother's hand and pressed it to his lips, and then seemed buried in painful thought as if attempting to revive other memories; but Felix discouraged these musings, and drew his mind to more pleasing subjects.

One morning Felix was informed that a gentleman awaited him at his rooms. He entered and soon learned that the visitor was the “good doctor.” The most cordial feelings were exchanged. Felix related the disclosure and death of Horace Layton in the character of Darkman, and the restoration to mental consciousness of his elder brother, the present heir. They adjourned to Mr. Falkland's. The whole family welcomed the good doctor, who gradually unfolded to Job—now Abel Temple—the nature of the trust so long since reposed in him, and how that he was now the heir to all this property. Job comprehended these explicit statements; but they seemed to beget a degree of thought and sorrow that made Felix alarmed lest his mind should relapse into its former weakness. Job now walked and sat alone. He was ever restless and in mental uneasiness, until, one morning, entering a room where the only oc-

occupant was Emily, he cast himself upon the couch beside her in apparent despair, exclaiming :

“ Emily, I cannot leave you. I cannot go to that old house which my father would not have. I need your instruction and your guidance every hour. I will not visit this unknown place unless you accompany me.”

“ What mean you, Abel ? ” inquired Emily.

“ I mean that Agnes and Felix will be married; why should not you and I ? You start, dear Emily,” continued Job, as she exhibited great emotion. “ I fear that I have used wrong language; but, what I want to ask is that you and I may become to each other what Agnes and Felix are about to be.”

Poor Emily was terribly confused at this unique avowal of her orthodox suitor; but she was relieved from a reply so difficult to frame by an occurrence little less distressing—the entrance of Agnes and Felix. They paused at the door as they perceived the agitation of Emily; but she would not permit them to retire. She arose, and advancing toward Agnes, leaned against her for support. Felix looked inquiringly at his brother, who, alarmed at the state of Emily, afforded an explanation to the scene by exclaiming, sorrowfully :

“ I have caused all this—I spoke to Emily of marriage.”

A smile of significance passed between Agnes and Felix—the mystery was solved—and they determined to complete what had been most gracelessly begun. Felix took the hand of his brother, and Agnes that of her fair cousin, and joined them, Agnes observing, with great fervor, to Job :

“ On you alone, I would confer my cousin,” while Felix remarking to Emily :

“ You, Emily, who so generously cherished poor Job Witless, are doubly worthy of Abel Temple,” they both quitted the apartment.

From that hour the brow of Job became unclouded, and he and Emily seemed to live only for each other.

At an early day the brothers were united to the cousins. The ceremonies were performed, the minister had closed his book, and the brides and bridegrooms were receiving the congratulations of their friends, when a burly officer of the army followed by a rustic looking girl, advanced toward Felix, exclaiming :

“ I guess that there's nobody here wishes you more joy than I.”

“ What,” exclaimed Felix, as he grasped the proffered hand, “ Si Brambles, my worthy fellow-soldier ! ” then casting his eye upon his ruddy follower, he added : “ are you come thus attended to seek happiness at the same shrine as myself ? ”

The warrior laughed aloud, even beneath that venerable roof.

“ Well that's Sal Spikes, for an hour or two your nurse,” he said, and again commenced an immoderate fit of laughter.

“ No, no,” continued Si, “ she's come to bring the news that the old homstead's destroyed by fire—burnt to the last stick—nothing but black ashes to be seen. I'm glad on't Major. I guess I'm mad

with joy. I hated the old place since the night I turned you from the door."

At this moment Si Brambles espied Abel Temple, who had stood minutely studying the burly officer during the dialogue with Felix.

"Yes, 'tis; no tain't," he exclaimed in amazement. "Yes, it must be Job—Job Witless—all dressed up."

"Silence, good Si," interposed Felix, quietly, "it is my brother; but, return with us, and I will tell you all."

As they quitted the church, Abel said to the fair Emily:

"Dearest Emily, Si Brambles is a character in my dream. How singularly truthful that strange vision is. Did you not hear him call me Job—Job Witless?"

"Let us dismiss these shadowy thoughts," said Emily, smiling, "and think only of the happiness of the day."

Abel pressed her hand in joyful acquiescence.

Happiness, however, is intermitting. It alternates with grief in our passage to the grave. Ten days after this double union, he who was the warrior was summoned to the battle-field. Felix Temple was ordered to join his regiment. With firmness, but not without anguish, Felix and Agnes separated, and many months transpired before they met again.

When peace and liberty were won, and the gallant Felix sheathed his sword in victory, he returned to the arms of his exulting wife. They established themselves in the former residence of his dear parents, while Abel and Emily lived in that of the contrite Horace Layton, and the lordly avenue, so sacred to their father's friendship, was soon again the great highway from house to house. Emily, with inherent gentleness, had revealed to her devoted husband that the scenes he ascribed to visions occurred during a period of his life passed in unconsciousness. His father's death, however, had no place in his memory, nor could he recognize the cottage of Rachel Warner. Beside the spot which marked their parent's fall, the brothers reared another grave to the memory of their father's friend, and the same willow spread its penile branches over the two mounds. Mr. Falkland resided with Agnes, from whom he could not separate, and the "good doctor" had claimed a home with Emily. These worthy elders were devoted to each other, and daily met beneath those glorious trees that led from house to house, and after a time they were accompanied by a herd of little Temples, who, by their noisy gambols, gave evidence that they were dedicated as much to frolic as to fame.

Si Brambles had also returned somewhat the worse for the rough usage of enemies, but nothing could induce him to look again upon the site of his old homestead. It was still blackened with ashes. He sold the whole property, and erected another house in a different locality. He was a frequent visitor to the Temples, and eventually married Sally Spikes, because she was ever a willing listener to his often repeated tales of the martial daring and unspotted character of Felix.

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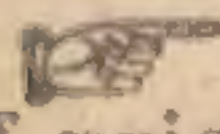
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